



City of Rockville  
**Lincoln Park  
Neighborhood  
Plan**



**September 2005  
Staff Draft**



**City of Rockville, Maryland**

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## Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan

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## **Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION**

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### **Purpose**

The primary purpose for preparing a new neighborhood plan for the Lincoln Park neighborhood is to provide an opportunity for neighborhood residents to plan for their community's future. This need was identified during the planning process for the *Town Center Master Plan* in 2001. That effort, which initially included recommendations for the Stonestreet Avenue corridor because the corridor is within the Town Center Planning Area, focused on the core of Town Center but also included recommendations with significant implications for the adjacent communities of Lincoln Park and East Rockville. The Mayor and Council ultimately determined that the Stonestreet corridor and the eastern portion of the Rockville Metro station site should be included as part of new neighborhood plans for both Lincoln Park and East Rockville.

The neighborhood planning process affords the community an opportunity to address other issues and concerns as well. The previous Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan was adopted in 1984 and provided guidance for a 20-year time period. An updated neighborhood plan will be the blueprint for the future that will guide public and private decisions for Lincoln Park in the foreseeable future. By responding to changes taking place within and close to the neighborhood, the community has seized the opportunity to make positive change happen, both within and outside of the neighborhood.

### **Planning Area**

The Lincoln Park Neighborhood has an extensive history as one of the oldest African-American communities in Montgomery County, dating to the 1850s. Today, the neighborhood is primarily a single-family residential community surrounded on three sides by a variety of non-residential uses, particularly light industrial areas. The Rockville Town Center is to the south and separated from the neighborhood by the Metro/railroad tracks and a major highway. There are a wide variety of housing types of varying ages, sizes, and conditions. Although there is limited retail service within the neighborhood, retail opportunities in the nearby Town Center provide for everyday shopping needs. Regional transit, bikeways, parks and open space are also within the neighborhood or close by.

The Lincoln Park neighborhood has been a stable and secure community for many years. Members of the community have expressed a strong connection and identification with the community, in many cases for generations. Although there have been exceptions over the years, the predominant land use within the community has been single-family homes. It is the clear intent of this Plan to provide a framework for the neighborhood to maintain its sense of community and identity for future generations.



Figure 1. Lincoln Park Planning Area and Vicinity

As defined by the 2002 *Comprehensive Master Plan*, the Lincoln Park Planning Area (Planning Area 6) is located northeast of Rockville's Town Center, and is bounded generally by North Horners Lane (between Lincoln Avenue and Westmore Road on the east, the East Rockville Planning Area on the south, the Metro/CSX tracks on the west, and the Westmore industrial area and City limits on the north.

## Community Characteristics

The latest population figures from Census 2000 indicate that the population of the Lincoln Park neighborhood is 900 persons. Ethnic and racial diversity continues to expand in the neighborhood, as shown in Table 3 below, although the neighborhood population contains a higher percentage of Black and Hispanic residents than Rockville as a whole. Other statistical information related to housing and land use is also included in Tables 1 and 2 below. The Census shows a slightly higher than average persons per household figure of 2.7, compared with the City's figure of 2.65. Single-family uses occupy almost 80% of the neighborhood land area.

### 1. Neighborhood Characteristics (2000 Census)    2. Land Use Acreage

Residents	900	Area (acres)	82
Housing Units	329	Single-Family Residential	64.9
Attached Units	62	Parkland	5.6
Apartments	59	Attached/multifamily	5.8
Average Persons per HH	2.7	Open Space (Cemetery)	3.3
Housing Density (units per acre)	4.0	Commercial (Retail)	1.4

There are 329 residences in the 82 acres of Lincoln Park, of which 208 are single-family homes. Most of the homes are small in size, ranging from 900 to 1,500 square feet in floor area, while built on relatively large but narrow lots of 10,000 square feet or more.

### 3. Population Characteristics (2000 Census)

White	37 (4%)
Black	622 (69%)
Hispanic	195 (22%)
Asian	15 (1.5%)
Other	31 (3.5%)

## Planning History

City-sponsored comprehensive planning for Lincoln Park began during the 1950s when a *Master Plan for the Stonestreet Avenue Area* was developed. This Plan, published in 1957, intended to provide for coordinated light industrial development including research and development (R&D) facilities in the Stonestreet corridor, contrasting with the random development that had taken place until that time. The Plan also intended to protect the adjacent residential neighborhood through better industrial standards as well as provide street closings and realignments that were intended to separate industrial and residential traffic. A *Comprehensive Plan for Rockville*, the first for a Maryland city, was created and adopted in 1960. That Plan detailed the future growth of Rockville

through the development of new self-contained residential neighborhoods, and encouraged the protection of existing residential communities like Lincoln Park.

The 1970 *Master Plan for Rockville* divided the City into fifteen neighborhood planning areas, including the planning area known as Lincoln Park (Planning Area 6). The 1970 *Master Plan* sought to maintain established neighborhoods and eliminate the influences of haphazard commercial, industrial, and incompatible non-residential development. The Plan also recommended the continued pattern of single family detached residential neighborhoods, and to limit further expansion of commercial areas and associated traffic into existing residential neighborhoods.

The *Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan* was adopted in 1984 as one of the initial neighborhood efforts in the City to integrate local concerns with long range planning policies. The neighborhood plan was based on four primary goals: maintaining and increasing the opportunities for affordable housing alternatives while protecting the community from nonresidential encroachment; providing the best possible services and facilities to the neighborhood; establishing circulation patterns that protect the residential neighborhood; and maintaining a secure and stable residential neighborhood.

Rockville's 1993 *Approved and Adopted Master Plan* continued the concept of neighborhood planning areas, and reaffirmed the findings of the 1984 *Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan*. Specific recommendations for Planning Area 6 (Lincoln Park) included support for neighborhood stability and outlined potential concerns about adjacent non-residential areas. The 2002 *Comprehensive Master Plan* for Rockville reaffirmed that infill development, adjacent industrial areas and traffic issues are major issues, and also recommended updating the 1984 Neighborhood Plan.

### **Relationship with Adjacent Planning Areas**

The Lincoln Park Planning Area, which is almost entirely residential, abuts the Town Center Planning Area, which contains the North Stonestreet Avenue industrial corridor, the Rockville Metro station and industrial properties on South Stonestreet Avenue. Planning within this area typically would be through policies contained in the *Town Center Master Plan*, which was adopted by the Mayor and Council in 2001 with the help of a Master Plan Advisory Group and consultant team. That Plan's goal envisions Town Center as a 24 hour center that is "... easily identifiable, pedestrian-oriented, and incorporating a mix of uses and activities." Town Center redevelopment will be within walking distance to the Rockville Metro station, and will also impact the quality of life in surrounding neighborhoods.

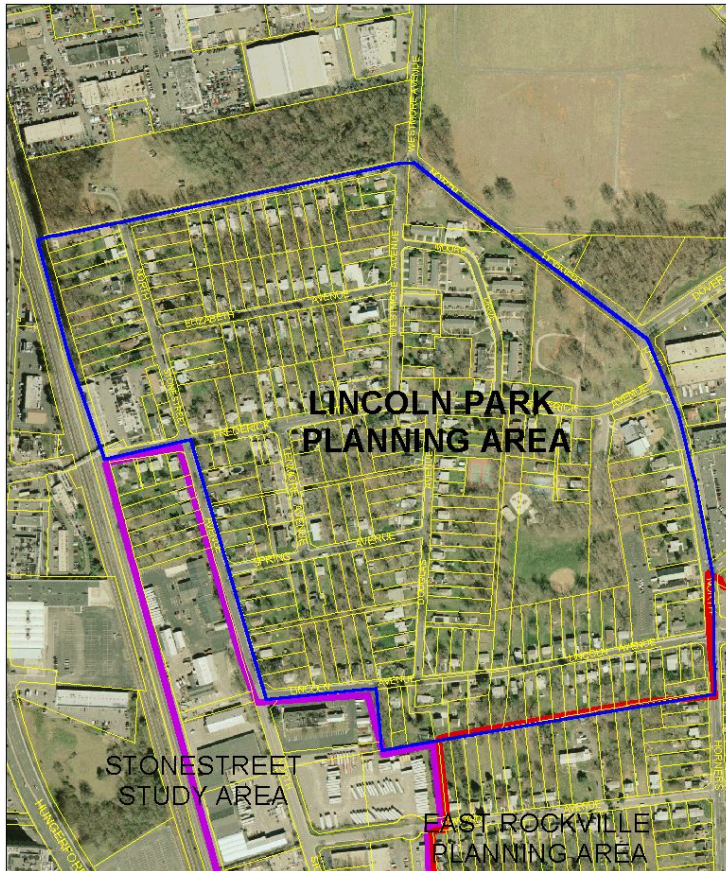


Figure 2. Aerial View of the Lincoln Park Planning Area and Vicinity

During the development of the *Town Center Master Plan*, it became apparent that the land areas east of the Metro/CSX tracks were impacted. For this reason, the Mayor and Council determined that a new neighborhood plan would be developed for the East Rockville and Lincoln Park neighborhoods. Any zoning changes or recommendations affecting the neighborhood would be part of the recommendations for the new neighborhood plans. This represented a major commitment on the part of the City and the neighborhood to address cooperatively the issues and concerns of the communities.

The *East Rockville Neighborhood Plan* was adopted by the Mayor and Council in March 2004. The revised *Lincoln Park*

*Neighborhood Plan* supports the recommendations contained in that Plan. The Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan also expands on the fundamental concepts of the *Comprehensive Master Plan* for Rockville, adopted in 2002, the previous *Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan* of 1984 and the *Town Center Master Plan*, adopted in 2001.

### Lincoln Park Neighborhood Planning Process

A Community Kickoff Meeting for the Lincoln Park neighborhood planning process was held on May 9, 2002, and was attended by 65 persons. After a brief presentation on the purpose of the meeting, attendees were divided into three groups. Attendees were asked to identify the strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities for the current and future conditions of the Lincoln Park neighborhood. After the groups had identified these, each group prioritized the items by casting votes in each category.

The important concepts that were expressed were based on a strong community awareness that recognizes the history and shared values of Lincoln Park. Noted strengths included: access to transportation and local commercial services; affordable housing in the neighborhood; location and security; excellent City services; and a

favorable location near the Town Center and the Metro. Weaknesses were considered to be problems that undermine the sense of community that long-term residents respect, and included such problems as loitering and drug use, street crime, traffic noise, large vehicles parked in the neighborhood, and poorly maintained homes.

Opportunities for the future of the neighborhood included retention of homes, the provision of more housing for households with a range of incomes, the opportunity for more dialog with the Mayor and Council, and stronger code enforcement that would improve housing conditions. More community retail services were also important for future neighborhood success. Threats to the neighborhood were mainly problems that threatened stability and home ownership, including increased crime, the potential for additional cut-through traffic, and industrial and commercial expansion.

The purpose of the Community Kickoff Meeting was to introduce the concept of the Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan, provide an opportunity for residents to become involved in the planning process, and to solicit information regarding residents' current views of the neighborhood (strengths and weaknesses) and desires for the future (threats and opportunities). Those attending were also asked to serve as volunteers on the Neighborhood Plan Advisory Group, which would guide the development of the Plan. The Community Kickoff Meeting Summary (Appendix 2) provides a complete record of the meeting results.

### **Neighborhood Plan Advisory Group**

In July 2002, the Mayor and Council appointed volunteer members of the Neighborhood Plan Advisory Group to guide the development of the neighborhood plan. The Advisory Group consisted primarily of neighborhood residents. The Group held its first meeting in late August 2002, and met approximately every other week through Spring 2003. The Group reviewed the Background Report compiled by City staff (See Appendix 1), as well as the Community Kickoff Meeting summary (See Appendix 2) to learn factual information about the Planning Area prior to beginning discussions. During this time, the Advisory Group considered a variety of topics related to the future of Lincoln Park, including future land use, transportation, redevelopment, historic preservation and the environment. The Advisory Group also met with the East Rockville Neighborhood Plan Advisory Group, which was updating its neighborhood plan. These joint meetings provided the opportunity to discuss common issues and land areas of mutual concern, areas and to cooperatively resolve issues.

### **Neighborhood Vision**

The Advisory Group considered various vision statements for inclusion in the neighborhood plan. These statements express the desires of the community, via the Advisory Group, and form the basis for the objectives and recommendations of the

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Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan. Ultimately, the Advisory Group determined that the Plan should have the following goals:

**Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan Goals**

- **Maintain and enhance Lincoln Park as a stable and secure residential neighborhood.**
- **Provide housing opportunities for residents with a range of incomes and promote homeownership opportunities for residents who are or will be owner-occupants, while protecting the residential character of the neighborhood from nonresidential encroachment and nonconforming land uses**
- **Establish circulation patterns and opportunities, including vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian and public transit, which protect the residential nature of the Lincoln Park neighborhood.**
- **Achieve a healthy, vibrant, and sustainable environment in the neighborhood that protects, preserves and restores natural resources, while reducing or eliminating negative environmental impacts for current and future populations.**
- **Protect the physical and cultural heritage of the Lincoln Park Neighborhood utilizing historic preservation principles and tools.**

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## **Chapter 2: LAND USE**

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### **GOALS:**

**Maintain and enhance Lincoln Park as a stable and secure residential neighborhood.**

**Provide housing opportunities for residents with a range of incomes and promote homeownership opportunities for residents who are or will be owner-occupants, while protecting the residential character of the neighborhood from nonresidential encroachment and nonconforming land uses.**

### **Objectives**

1. Maintain the single-family residential character of the community at the density allowed by existing zoning.
2. Prohibit incompatible residential development within the residential neighborhood area.
3. Eliminate industrial uses and zoning for redevelopment areas such as the Board of Education property on North Stonestreet Avenue, the WINX site on Ashley Avenue, and the industrial areas on Frederick Avenue and North Horners Lane.
4. Encourage vacant or redevelopable land to become residential at the earliest opportunity.
5. Ensure institutional uses, including schools, shelters and churches, are compatible with the character of the community.
6. Increase the amount of parkland serving the neighborhood.
7. Ensure absentee landlords maintain their properties.
8. Encourage property owners and landlords to monitor undesirable activities to ensure stable households in the residential community.
9. Preserve the character of the community as a historical resource.

### **Neighborhood Concept**

The Lincoln Park neighborhood has been a stable and secure community for many years, and it is the intent of the neighborhood plan that it remain so. Members of the community have expressed a strong connection and identification with the community, in many cases for generations. It is the intent of this Plan to help maintain this unique neighborhood identity for future generations.

With few exceptions, the predominant land use within the community has been single-family homes. Because of the origins of the community in the 1890s, and with home construction occurring relatively continuously since then, the community has acquired a

diversity of home styles and sizes that is unique to Rockville. The majority of homes in the neighborhood are owner-occupied, also contributing to the connection and affection that many residents feel for the community.

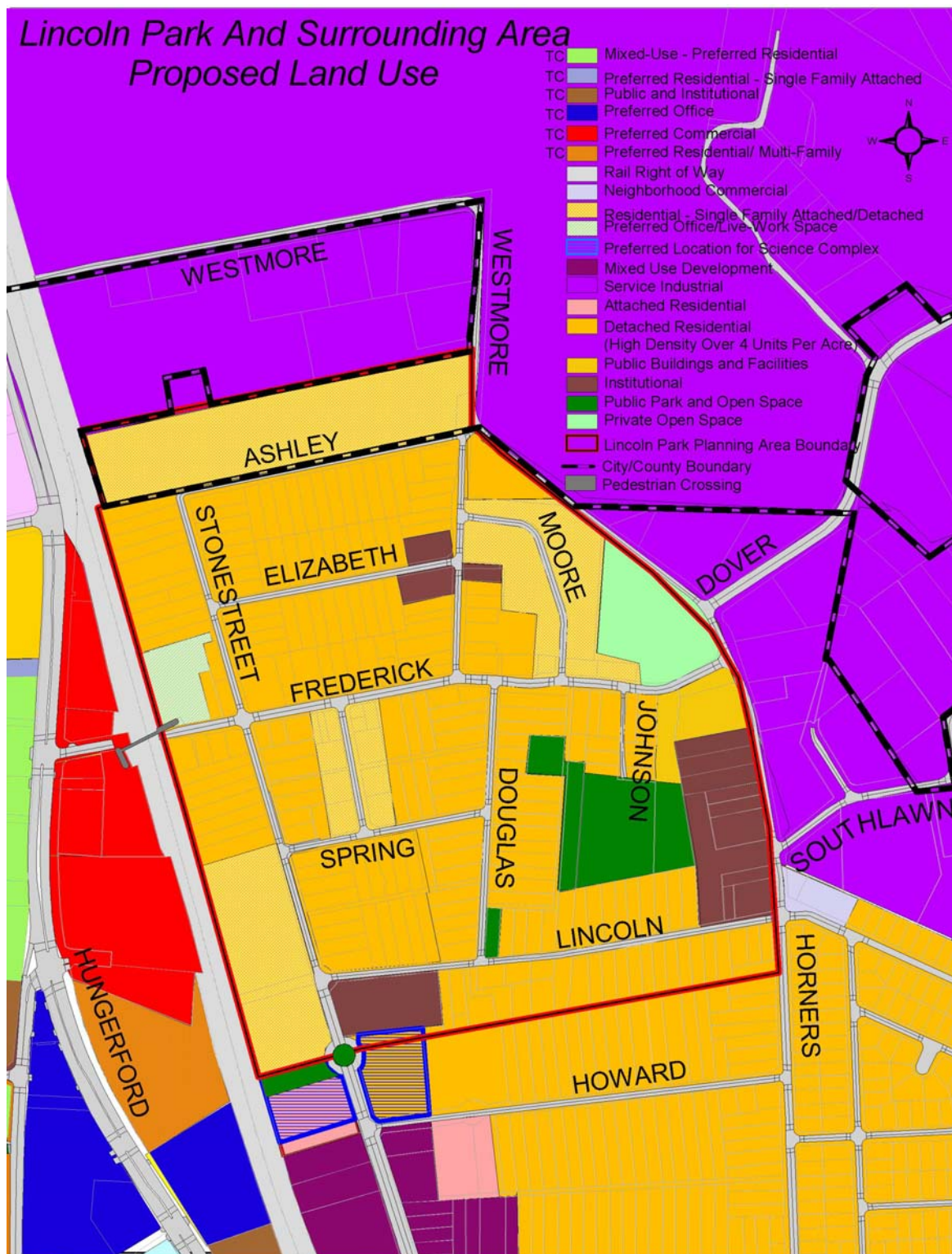


Figure 3. Proposed Land Use Map

## Residential Neighborhood Area

Because Lincoln Park is a community of homes, preservation and enhancement of residences is fundamental to maintaining the character of the neighborhood. Keeping the existing housing stock in good repair is an important part of the neighborhood's future, particularly as neighborhood homes age. Also critical is ensuring that any new construction, such as new homes or additions to existing homes, is compatible with the community's character. Increasing the amount of housing available to neighborhood residents is also a key recommendation, and coincides with the desire to replan and redevelop some of the adjacent industrial and commercial properties into residential areas.

Most of the neighborhood is zoned R-60, which allows for single-family detached residential homes on lots with a minimum size of 6,000 square feet. The Plan explicitly recommends that the single-family character of the Lincoln Park neighborhood be retained, and therefore does not recommend any changes to a zone other than the existing R-60 Zone. In addition, Special Development Procedures such as Planned Residential Units (PRU) or Residential Townhouse (RTH) are prohibited within the existing residential area in order to preclude assemblage of residential lots for redevelopment.

New residences within the neighborhood are expected to be limited to those that can be built on existing lots, or on lots that can be subdivided in a manner that is consistent with the neighborhood lot pattern. Incompatible resubdivisions can impair neighborhood character, especially when new homes can be built on lots that do not have traditional frontage on a public street. These types of lots are known as pipestem lots, and often are detrimental to neighborhood character and streetscape.



Figure 4. Example of pipestem lot



Figure 5. Westmore Avenue

Although the City Zoning Ordinance allows pipestem lots, provided that minimum requirements are met, this type of subdivision is not deemed compatible with the neighborhood. In Lincoln Park, some of the long and narrow lots may be susceptible to resubdivision in this manner, depending on the amount of lot frontage available. This is especially true in the R-60 Zone, and the small

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minimum lot size of 6,000 square feet. New pipestem lots are therefore not recommended in the neighborhood.

At a minimum, both existing and new residences in Lincoln Park must conform to existing R-60 standards for lot coverage, setbacks and height limits. However, an historical survey has been undertaken in the neighborhood to identify the unique architectural characteristics, neighborhood character and residential construction features that are found in Lincoln Park. This study will form the basis, along with community involvement, of any new historic or neighborhood conservation district. Review of new construction for conformance with guidelines developed by and for the community would then be necessary. More detailed information is found in Chapter 3, Historic Preservation.

The only multifamily units in Lincoln Park are the Rocklin Park Apartments on Lenmore Avenue. These garden apartment structures were built in the 1950s, and contain 59 units in the R-20 (Multiple Family Residential) Zone. This zoning has proven to be incompatible with the surrounding neighborhood of single family homes. Although the buildings appear clean and neat, should they be redeveloped, this Plan recommends a mix of single family detached, attached and duplex units to replace the structures. At a minimum, façade and site improvements should be encouraged to allow the structures to be more visually compatible with the community.

### *Recommendations*

- Encourage the production of new housing to focus on ownership opportunities, rather than rental units.
- Redevelop designated nonresidential areas for residential use.
- Consider establishment of a Lincoln Park historic and/or conservation district, after conduct of a survey to determine available resources and a community involvement process.
- Retain the R-60 Zone for existing residential property within the Planning Area.
- Ensure resubdivisions are compatible with the existing lot pattern in the neighborhood. Pipestem lots are discouraged due to incompatibility with the existing lot pattern.
- Development proposals seeking to assemble property within the residential neighborhood for the purposes of developing housing other than single-family detached units are incompatible with this neighborhood plan.
- Prohibit Special Development Procedures, such as Planned Residential Units (PRU) and Residential Townhouse (RTH) development from being constructed within the residential neighborhood. These procedures may be used on properties recommended for residential redevelopment in the Plan.
- Redevelop the Rocklin Park apartments to a mix of single-family detached, attached and duplex units. In the event of redevelopment, the Plan supports a rezoning to the R-60 Zone to be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.
- Support City requirements for the provision of Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs) in developments of 50 or more units.

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## Redevelopment Areas

Although most of the land within Lincoln Park is planned and zoned for single family homes, other uses have encroached into or adjacent to the neighborhood over the years. The neighborhood is surrounded by industrial property on the west, north and east sides. Redevelopment of the nonresidential property as residential is required to ensure that further incompatible encroachment does not occur.

### *WINX Property*

The property just north of the Planning Area known as the WINX property is currently not located within the corporate limits of Rockville. This 10-acre property is mostly wooded, although some tree clearing has occurred on the site, and includes radio transmission towers that were formerly used by radio station WINX. The property is located in Montgomery County's I-1 Zone, which allows for industrial uses; however, sewer and water service to the site can only be provided by the City of Rockville because it is outside of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) service area. In order for the property to redevelop on central sewer and water service, it must be annexed into the City.

Previous City Master Plans, including the 1984 *Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan* and the 2002 *Comprehensive Master Plan*, have recommended the property for residential development per the standards of the R-60 Zone. The County's recently-adopted *Upper Rock Creek Master Plan*, recognizing that the property has limited utility

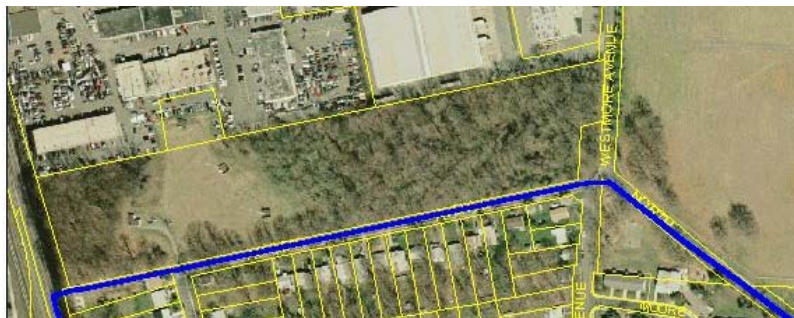


Figure 6. WINX Property

for development in the County I-1 Zone, strongly supports residential development of the property per recommendations in City Master Plans. This is significant, because the County Council would be required to approve zoning on the property that differs from the existing zoning in the County, should an annexation petition be filed. With the County Master Plan supporting this action, the County Council would be much more likely to approve such a request.

This Plan therefore continues to recommend residential development for the property and its annexation into the City for that purpose. Given that this is a largely undeveloped parcel immediately across Ashley Avenue from existing residences, the design, amount, and type of residential development to be allowed is critical to maintaining the quality of life for the existing Lincoln Park neighborhood. In addition, the new development should be designed to be an extension of the neighborhood, rather than a complex isolated from the community. The property is recommended to be

developed with a mix of single family detached, attached (townhouse) and semi-detached (duplex) units. Upon annexation, the property is recommended to be placed in the R-60 Zone, the same zone as the rest of the neighborhood. The model to be followed in terms of the mix of unit types and design is the redevelopment of the Lincoln Terrace public housing community on Moore Drive, tailored to the site conditions of the WINX property. The property is transitional in that it is located between an existing single family neighborhood and service industrial uses. Therefore, the use of the Residential Townhouse (RTH) process is an appropriate model, as the City does not currently have a zone to accomplish this transition appropriately. Based on the desire for single family detached homes on this site, the maximum density to be achieved on the site should be limited to 9 (nine) dwelling units per acre, which is approximately 92 units. This would require modification to the RTH procedure to allow construction of single family detached dwellings within the RTH development, which is not currently permitted.

It should be noted that this density will be further limited through careful site planning that incorporates several factors. Single family homes should be built along the entire frontage of Ashley Avenue (the north side of the street) in order for the new residences to be compatible with the existing homes on the south side. A mix of single family attached and duplex units could be built on the remainder of the property, provided that the site design complies with the other recommendations. There is a requirement for tree preservation and reforestation on the site, the need for significant buffering of the new residences from the service industrial uses to the north in the Westmore Industrial Park, and the provision of a pocket park on the property to serve new and existing residents. Maximum consideration for site access should be given to the Westmore Avenue frontage, rather than along Ashley Avenue or North Stonestreet Avenue. If site access is provided from North Stonestreet Avenue, only a portion of the units should be accessed from this entrance to restrict unwarranted traffic impacts on existing neighborhood streets. If two entrances are provided, ideally the design should discourage traffic to cut through this property.

### *Recommendations*

- Develop a mix of single family detached, attached and semi-detached units on the property, with density not to exceed 9 (nine) dwelling units per acre.
- Single family homes must be developed on the north side of Ashley Avenue opposite the existing homes on the south side.
- Employ lot width, as well as front and side setback standards of the R-60 Zone for single family detached units.
- Provide adequate screening and buffering of new residences from the adjacent industrial park and railroad tracks, to include construction of an attractive wall or other barrier.
- In addition to tree save areas and buffers, a small community pocket park should be provided as an amenity to the neighborhood and new residents.

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### *Lincoln Terrace*

The Lincoln Terrace public housing community, owned by Rockville Housing Enterprises (RHE) was a rental community of 65 townhouses located on 5.4 acres on Moore Drive. RHE is currently redeveloping the site into a mixed-income community that will offer homes for purchase rather than rental. The 60 new residential units will be a mix of townhomes and single family detached homes. The proposal retains Moore Drive as the primary street to serve the development, and architecturally builds on the modest scale of residences in the neighborhood for its design inspiration. The Plan strongly supports the project as proposed as an expansion of homeownership opportunities in the neighborhood.

### *Recommendations*

- Support the redevelopment of the Lincoln Terrace public housing complex into a mixed-income community of single family detached and attached units, per the approved redevelopment plan.

### *MCPS Property*

The Montgomery County Public Schools own property on North Stonestreet Avenue that is known as the Lincoln Center, and includes a printing and distribution facility for the system, as well as storage. The property includes approximately 12.32 acres located in the R-60 Zone. The entire tract is split by North Stonestreet Avenue as well as the planning area boundary between Lincoln Park and East Rockville. Approximately 6 acres are located within the Lincoln Park planning area on the west side of North Stonestreet Avenue. The southern portion of the property located in the East Rockville Planning Area is recommended for townhomes (2.5 acres on the west side of North Stonestreet) and for single family detached homes on the 3.9 acres at the northeast corner of North Stonestreet and Howard Avenues.

This Plan recommends that the northern portion of the property (within the Lincoln Park planning area) be developed with a mix of single family detached, attached and duplex units, similar to the recommendations for the WINX property and following the model provided by the Lincoln Terrace redevelopment. The maximum density would be limited such that the overall maximum density for the entire acreage would be eight (8) units per acre. Multifamily and commercial uses would be prohibited. This would permit no more than 98 units on the entire property. It should be noted that the compatibility of the site design with the neighborhood should be the most important factor in determining the amount of units to be built on the site. However, an open space element such as a pocket park should be provided, as well as significant buffering and screening of the Metro/CSX tracks that abut the property. Single family homes should be constructed on the west side of North Stonestreet with similar lot frontage and streetscape relationships as the existing residences across North Stonestreet Avenue on the east side. Townhouse and duplex units may be constructed in remaining areas,

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particularly adjacent to the townhouse development recommended on the portion of the MCPS property located within the East Rockville planning area, but must be in a compatible site design with the single family units fronting on North Stonestreet Avenue. Existing mature trees on the site should be retained as much as possible.

### *Recommendations*

- Redevelop the property owned by MCPS within the Lincoln Park planning area with a mix of single family detached, attached and duplex units. The site design should allow the new community to be an extension of the neighborhood.
- A pocket park and significant buffering should be provided from the Metro/CSX tracks.
- Prohibit retail or multifamily uses on the site.
- Employ the R-60 development standards for the single family detached units on the site to ensure compatibility in lot pattern and building mass.
- The preferred architectural style is eclectic, and the scale should compliment the character of the neighborhood.

### *110 Frederick Avenue*

The property at 110 Frederick Avenue, adjacent to the CSX railroad tracks, includes approximately 1.5 acres located in the I-2 (Industrial Park) Zone. It contains two structures that include a variety of businesses, such as warehouses and others similar to those on North Stonestreet Avenue. With the exception of the railroad tracks and Unity Bridge, the property is surrounded by single family homes in the R-60 Zone. Although no incompatibility problems have been noted on the property as it is currently configured, the prospect of redevelopment or reuse under I-2 standards could render the property significantly incompatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

The Plan recommends that the property transition to a potential site for live-work units, which might include small-scale retail, service or office uses on the ground floor and residential loft or multifamily units above. The Plan further recommends that the property be rezoned to a zone that would afford a more compatible set of permitted uses. The TCE (Town Center East) Zone recommended for the industrial portions of North Stonestreet Avenue could offer an opportunity. Pending the outcome of the Stonestreet Avenue Implementation Plan recommended by the *East Rockville Neighborhood Plan*, the TCE Zone or some variation with some uses excluded would allow for continuing use of the property and increased compatibility with the neighborhood.

### *Recommendations*

- Should the property redevelop, the preferred use is for live-work units of modest scale. Expansion of additional industrial uses or floor area is not recommended.

- Rezone the property at 110 Frederick Avenue to the TCE Zone or some variation, that would allow small scale retail, office, some service industrial uses, or multifamily units, including the potential for live-work units.

### *Stonestreet Corridor*

The North Stonestreet Avenue corridor consists of approximately 25 acres of land that is presently in the City's I-1 (Service Industrial) Zone. The zone has allowed for the development and use of these properties as construction and vehicular storage lots, auto and truck repair, and various other service industrial uses. Many of these uses are not compatible with the single-family residential neighborhoods in Lincoln Park and East Rockville that are immediately adjacent. Noise, litter, light and air pollution and cut-through traffic from the various uses all contribute to the incompatibility.

North Stonestreet Avenue functions as a gateway to the Lincoln Park neighborhood. As recommended in the *East Rockville Neighborhood Plan*, the redevelopment concept for North Stonestreet Avenue is to transform the corridor into a mixed-use area of neighborhood serving retail, residential and small-scale office uses. As a potential Cultural Arts and Entertainment District for Rockville, it will become a desired location for cultural



*Figure 7. Montgomery County Public Schools Property*

institutions such as a Science Complex and educational facilities, as well as art galleries, artist studios and related facilities. This will be accommodated in new buildings to be constructed in the corridor, and also potentially by the reuse and renovation of existing structures. The design and scale of the redevelopment is to be that of a traditional "Main Street" of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The desired uses in the new buildings include community-serving retail uses such as dry-cleaners, coffee shops, banks, professional offices and other complementary uses. New buildings should front directly on sidewalks, at heights of two or three stories, as the maximum height limit in the new zone will be 45 feet. The ground floor level should consist of storefronts, small professional offices and arts-related uses. Second story uses include small-scale offices and multifamily units such as lofts. Loft-style residences should be located above the first story of buildings, which could create the potential for live-work units.

North Stonestreet Avenue itself will be transformed into a boulevard, with a planted median, wide sidewalks with decorative paving patterns, street trees and planting areas, period street lighting, pedestrian zones for outdoor seating and other street amenities. There should be one travelway in each direction, with on-street parking provided on both sides of the street. A traffic circle is proposed along North Stonestreet between Howard and Lincoln Avenues to effect a transition between the mixed use area to the south and the Lincoln Park residential neighborhood. It will also function as a traffic control element that will allow vehicles from the Stonestreet mixed-use area to turn around and proceed south on North Stonestreet, avoiding neighborhood streets in Lincoln Park and East Rockville.

### *Recommendations*

- Support the recommendations for the redevelopment of the North Stonestreet Avenue industrial area contained in the *East Rockville Neighborhood Plan*.
- Construct a pedestrian-friendly circle along North Stonestreet Boulevard, between Howard and Lincoln Avenues, to permit a trolley or shuttle transportation and traffic turn-around. The circle is expected to calm the impact of traffic on Lincoln Park and provide for turn around traffic visiting the commercial area of North Stonestreet Boulevard.
- Provide a free or low cost trolley or Ride On shuttle service along the new North Stonestreet Boulevard to connect Town Center East with the core of Town Center. The transportation service will bring people from North Stonestreet Boulevard and Lincoln Park to the Metro station, across Route 355 to Town Center, the new Rockville Regional Library, and back to Stonestreet Boulevard.
- Develop a Science Complex including a science museum, a science center, and science meeting center. The East Rockville Neighborhood Plan identified the MCPS property, on either side of North Stonestreet, as the preferred location for the Complex.
- Develop property north of the mixed-use area with single-family (attached or detached) homes in keeping with the rest of the adjacent neighborhoods of East Rockville and Lincoln Park.

### **Neighborhood Commercial Uses**



*Figure 8. View of Maryvale Center*

The Lincoln Park Planning Area does not contain any commercial retail structures. However, the Maryvale Center, which contains small retail stores and carry-out restaurants, is located immediately adjacent to the planning area on North Horners Lane. The shopping center is located in the City's C-1 (Local Commercial) Zone, which allows for limited commercial retail to serve neighborhoods. Over the years, there have been many complaints about alcohol sales for off-premise

consumption, loitering and other issues relating to the operations of some tenants in the center. While recent remedies have helped the situation, any activity of this type, and the facilities that support it, is unacceptable. Although a limited amount of commercial development to provide convenience retail services for the community can be an asset, retailers and facilities that encourage loitering or other negative aspects will not be tolerated. The Plan recommends that the existing zoned commercial areas not be allowed to expand their land area and that the properties be in compliance with the property maintenance code to minimize conflicts with the surrounding residential community. Many of the conflicts seem to be related to the sale of alcoholic beverages for off-premise consumption. This is not permitted in the C-1 Zone, and should be strictly enforced. Any alcoholic beverage licenses that are available for renewal must be scrutinized carefully for past compliance with the regulations.

Another retail use that is close to the neighborhood is the Maryvale Market, located at the corner of Howard Avenue and North Horners Lane in East Rockville. This market is a nonconforming use in the R-60 Zone. The East Rockville Plan does not recommend a change to C-1 zoning to allow the use to become conforming, but recommends that the commercial use eventually cease operations in order to eliminate the conflicts with the residential neighborhood that is caused by this use. This Plan supports the relevant regulations regarding property maintenance and alcoholic beverage sales must be strictly enforced to aid in neighborhood compatibility, and so that the use does not become an attractive nuisance.

### **Institutional Uses**

The Planning Area contains several institutional uses within and adjacent to the residential area:

- Mt. Calvary Baptist Church on North Horners Lane
- Clinton AME Zion Church on Elizabeth Avenue
- The Iglesia de Dios on Westmore Avenue
- Crusader Baptist Church of God on North Stonestreet Avenue



*Figure 9. Clinton AME Zion Church*

To date, neither Clinton AME Zion Church nor the Iglesia de Dios church facilities have been disruptive to the residential community that surrounds them. However, any expansion or change in use or operation of these facilities must be carefully considered so as not to impact the residential quality of life in Lincoln Park. In the event that the institutional uses cease operation, the preferred option is for these properties to be redeveloped as single-family homes per the underlying R-60 Zone. Alternatively, these properties may be occupied by institutional

uses with similar or lesser impacts on the community.

The community has struggled recently with the expansion plans of the Mt. Calvary Baptist Church on North Horners Lane, which caused considerable controversy in both the Lincoln Park and East Rockville neighborhoods. The church's initial proposal for expansion involved the purchase of nearby homes in the community in order to obtain additional land for church-supporting purposes such as off-street parking. Many of these lots were not contiguous to the church property and were surrounded by residential properties. This expansion plan was clearly not in character with the neighborhood, and the community strongly voiced this concern. Although the church will continue with expansion plans, it will be on lots contiguous to its property along North Horners Lane. The situation has raised the sensitivity of the community toward the expansion of institutional uses within the residential neighborhood.

Although the term "institutional uses" is a rather broad land use category, many are an integral part of the fabric of a community. Others negatively impact neighborhoods by virtue of their operations or physical expansion. The Lincoln Park neighborhood is extremely sensitive to these concerns, and for that reason the Plan recommends that no new institutional uses be located within the residential areas of Lincoln Park. In addition, the



Figure 10. View of Mt. Calvary Baptist Church

impacts of any expansions or change in operations of institutional uses must be closely evaluated by the neighborhood and the City of Rockville with respect to quality of life concerns. Begun in part because of concerns about Mt. Calvary expansion, recent amendments to the City's Zoning Ordinance have placed reasonable limitations on the expansion of institutional uses that are located within residential neighborhoods.

The adjacent public institutional use owned by the Montgomery County Board of Education is recommended to be redeveloped with a mix of residential units that will be more compatible with the community than the current industrial facility. Other existing institutional uses such as homeless shelters, while often providing needed social service facilities, should be closely monitored to ensure that their operation does not contribute to conflicts within the community.

### *Recommendations*

- Ensure that institutional uses are good neighbors to the Lincoln Park community. Any proposed expansion or change in use should be considered only if minimal

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or no reduction in neighborhood quality of life can be ensured. New institutional uses within the neighborhood or in redevelopment areas are discouraged.

- Reuse institutional properties with single-family residential dwellings per the underlying zoning.

### **Property Maintenance and Code Enforcement**

Although most homes in Lincoln Park are well maintained, as the housing stock continues to age, residential property maintenance will continue to be a concern in the future for some properties. The Plan therefore supports the property maintenance code and its fair and even-handed enforcement in Lincoln Park. However, it is essential that residents become educated about their responsibilities under the Property Maintenance Code. This information should be provided so that it is understandable to a broad range of residents, including those who may be impaired or may primarily speak a language other than English. In addition, the process should become more user-friendly than currently perceived by neighborhood residents, with communication between the code enforcement inspectors and neighborhood residents of vital importance.

#### *Recommendations*

- Develop and implement an educational component about property maintenance code enforcement procedures to ensure that neighborhood residents are knowledgeable about their homeowner responsibilities.
- Strictly enforce the property maintenance code and other applicable laws such as public health and sale of alcoholic beverage regulations, for the commercial retail properties located near the neighborhood.

### **Buffers and Transitions**

Although the neighborhood is well-defined by boundaries, these do not always provide appropriate transition areas between residential and nonresidential uses and other features such as the railroad. An opportunity exists with this Plan to provide buffers and transition areas to reinforce the residential quality of life in the community. The introduction of green space can be used not only to limit sight and sound of nearby buildings and uses, but also can contribute to the social and environmental health of the neighborhood. The Mayor and Council have enacted development standards that apply when nonresidential properties and residential properties abut. The new setback and building height standards will limit the height of new construction on nonresidential properties in the neighborhood that abut residential properties.

While much of the Plan's emphasis is on preserving the neighborhood and guiding potential redevelopment around the perimeter of the neighborhood, it also recognizes the need to address the conditions of other surrounding areas that impact the residential character of Lincoln Park. New buffers may be necessary to address this condition for industrial properties that are not likely to change in the near future, in order to ensure



Figure 11. Aerial view of Southlawn study area

some amount of screening between the incompatible uses. While the City cannot compel buffers to be provided on existing properties where none have been required, it may be possible to develop a program with incentives to allow buffers to be installed within an easement area on the industrial property or to require them as part of redevelopment.

Buffers are recommended for the industrial properties along North Horners Lane. In addition, a portion of the Southlawn industrial area that abuts the neighborhood should be examined for possible land use and transportation patterns that would be encouraged in order to create a more appropriate transition.

Currently zoned I-1 (Service Industrial), the area has been developed as a location for industrial uses such as general warehousing, auto repair and ancillary retail facilities for commodities appropriate to the zone can be found throughout this area. Unfortunately, truck and other heavy vehicular traffic associated with industrial services use neighborhood streets creating routine nonresidential traffic patterns. The neighborhood plan therefore recommends further study of the potential redevelopment of the portion of the Southlawn industrial area impacting the neighborhood, in order to achieve a more compatible land use pattern. One favorable option could be the diluting of industrial services by encouraging residential, retail, and office uses within this area in order to create a more mixed-use area that expands residential services and activities while still retaining elements of its current industrial use. These might include various types of dwelling units that combine space for work and space for living in both individual and group settings. Examples include service industrial uses with residential lofts as well as both attached and detached dwelling units.

A revised transportation network would be necessary to create both internal and external circulation patterns in order to support these uses while filtering existing nonresidential traffic away from streets such as North Horners Lane. Regardless of what the exact details will be, the idea that compatibility between residential neighborhoods and the nearby Southlawn area can be further enhanced through the redistribution of land uses and transportation system makes the compelling argument for a detailed study of this area.

### *Recommendations*

- Utilize landscape buffers, building setbacks and other limitations, and development that fits the scale of the neighborhood to function as a transition

between the edges of Lincoln Park and adjacent areas, such as the Southlawn industrial area and along North Horners Lane.

- Conduct a detailed study of the Southlawn industrial area closest to Lincoln Park and East Rockville to assess the feasibility of implementing a mixed-use, transitional industrial area in order to reduce the impacts of industrial properties on the community. This area could alter the nature of some industrial activity, while adding the potential for compliment of residential, retail, and office space.
- Re-examine the option of constructing a crossing of the Metro/CSX rail lines at Westmore Road to connect to MD 355 as part of the study. Industrial traffic could be diverted around the Lincoln Park neighborhood if an overpass or entry point were added in this area.

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## **Chapter 3: HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

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**GOAL:** Protect the physical and cultural heritage of the Lincoln Park Neighborhood utilizing historic preservation principles and tools.

### **Objectives**

1. Identify the historic resources and characteristics of Lincoln Park that serve as visual and physical reminders of its people, themes, and contributions to the neighborhood, city, and county's development.
2. Preserve, protect, and maintain the cultural, physical, and environmental integrity of historic resources and characteristics in Lincoln Park.
3. Develop and encourage programs that lead to the appreciation of Lincoln Park and Rockville's history and sites, and encourage heritage tourism.

### **Introduction**

Lincoln Park was under the jurisdiction of Montgomery County until July of 1949. Until its annexation into Rockville it lacked sanitary sewers, storm sewers, clean water service, hard surfaced roads and other public amenities. Lincoln Park and several other largely African-American communities near Rockville such as Haiti were closely allied with the City as a labor force from the days of slavery and after emancipation in 1863. Lincoln Park is not the oldest black or African-American settlement area in present day Rockville, but it is the only subdivision in Rockville and Montgomery County that was laid out in residential lots and platted for sale to African Americans.

### **History of Development in Lincoln Park**

During its history, Rockville evolved from a small agricultural village to a county seat, to a bedroom community for the federal government, and most recently to a commercial destination and high-technology employment center. For much of its early history, racial segregation was the societal norm. African Americans were often prohibited by legal covenants as well as by social custom from purchasing houses and property in predominantly "white" communities. Land that was available for sale to African Americans was often marshy, unproductive, or less desirable for residential development or agriculture. Persons perceived as descending from Africans were confined to employment in low-paying labor and service occupations, limiting household income. These societal factors influenced the location of African American communities and also the built environment in those communities.

Within the town limits of Rockville, the African American residential and commercial area was along North Washington Street and Middle Lane. The Middle Lane area was low, marshy ground and bisected by a small creek. Houses in this area were vernacular tidewater or two story structures long after the Colonial period ended.

This trend continued with the location of five African American families in the Horners Lane area before 1879 and the subsequent adjacent subdivision of Lincoln Park in 1891. Both were sited in an area with a high water table and many springs, and therefore less desirable for agriculture or housing.

The first dwellings built in Lincoln Park were vernacular buildings constructed from locally available raw materials such as fieldstone, hewn logs (timbers), rough-sawn boards, and hardwood clapboards and shingles. Since open fireplaces provided household heat, structures were often small with separate enclosed rooms, which were heated as needed. Heat in sleeping lofts above the main room depended on the fact that heated air rises. No architect was employed, and a property owner would contact a “house carpenter” and describe the type of house and number of floors and rooms to be built on a particular lot and the house would be built. Vernacular houses were the first structures built in Lincoln Park and continued to be built in communities of modest means such as Lincoln Park into the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. All of the examples of log and fieldstone houses in Lincoln Park are now gone or incorporated into larger structures. Several larger farmhouses and one brick urban-style dwelling are exceptions. Often the builders were local trades and craftsmen.

The advent of home catalogs, and the reasonably priced precut materials with plans enabling the homeowner to build their own home, led to the construction of a number of small bungalows and cottages in Lincoln Park from 1920 through 1945. Many of these homes still exist today. Most were designed with less than 1,000 square feet of living space and have been enlarged over time. In addition to vernacular houses and period catalog styles, many houses in Lincoln Park were built over the years by owners or their builders to suit personal tastes, with stylistic influences ranging from Georgian Colonial to Mediterranean.

## **Lincoln Park Social and Cultural History**

Lincoln Park is of major significance to the City of Rockville and Montgomery County in that it illustrates the social and cultural restrictions of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The major story of Lincoln Park is an investigation into how societal restrictions affected African American families and society and how people overcame these restrictions to form stable families, buy property and build houses, and create a community. In the larger sense, the existing residential lots, streets, and houses are evidence of these successes and the pathway to each individual story.

A comparison of the 1879 Hopkins Map of Montgomery County and the Plat of Lincoln Park and the First Addition to Lincoln Park suggests some overlap of existing African-

American properties and the platted subdivisions. The story of Reuben Hill's land purchase in this area is a clue that a strategy had been developed to purchase land with a cooperative buyer and developer, different than what is typically found in other land development patterns.

It is likely that the area that became Lincoln Park was set aside for African American ownership or considered suitable because at least five black families had already purchased land and established homes in the general area by 1879. A year later, Simeon Berry, a white former Confederate soldier, purchased one acre of land from Chandler Keys. Two days later, Berry sold one half of the land to Reuben Thomas Hill (son of Reuben Hill) for \$50. He willed the other half-acre and his personal property to the senior Reuben Hill upon his death in December of 1880. This house is thought to have been a small 1-1/2 story two-room dwelling with a loft, which is incorporated into the present structure at 305 Lincoln Avenue. Berry may have been a straw purchaser for the Hill family. However, the details of this arrangement, the link between the two men and families, and the frequency of this type of transaction, if indeed it was a straw purchase, are not known.

The story of the Hill family in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century is illustrative of the restrictions and hardships that African-Americans encountered before desegregation. Reuben Hill (1832-1917) was a slave of the Stonestreet family before emancipation. He was also a Union Army veteran. His wife, Rachel Martin, was a free mulatto woman and thus their children were born free. Reuben and Rachel did not formally marry until 1871 since he was a slave. They purchased land on "Burgundy", east of Horner's Lane after their marriage, and are one of the five African-American families shown on the 1879 Hopkins Atlas map. Their oldest child was Reuben Thomas Hill, born in 1856.

Reuben Hill Sr. and his son, Reuben Thomas Hill, a sexton for Christ Episcopal Church and a carpenter, later owned the property left by Simeon Berry. It is believed that Reuben Thomas Hill expanded the house to its present configuration after his father's death in 1917. He, in turn, left it to his two daughters, Edith Manley and Leola Williams, and to his grandson Carlisle Blair Hill, who was named after two families allied by marriage, the Carlisle and Blair families. The original lot was reduced in size in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Carlisle Blair Hill was raised at 305 Lincoln Avenue by his two aunts and eventually inherited the property. The family exhibited its pride in its role as one of the founding families of Lincoln Park and its stewardship and ownership of the oldest existing house in the community in the obituary of Carlisle Blair Hill in 1986, which stated that Mr. Hill was "the owner of a historic house in Rockville." Upon Carlisle Blair Hill's death, the house was left to Norma Hill Duffin of Lincoln Park. It has since been sold out of the Hill family.

One goal of a cultural history of Lincoln Park is to determine if the same pressures and restrictions on African Americans and land ownership that brought about the Hill's circuitous land ownership would apply to an entire subdivision. Was the creation of Lincoln Park initiated through the African American community through a sympathetic white man of means, William W. Welsh? By whatever means, it was rare to find a

residential subdivision for sale to African Americans in Maryland and the only known instance in Montgomery County.

### Lincoln Park Subdivision History

The land that became Lincoln Park was a rural area in 1890, but strategically located close to major roads, the railroad, and the Town of Rockville. The residents and owners probably practiced subsistence farming and gardening and earned cash to purchase items they could not produce.



Reuben Hill and others of African American descent purchased land in this area before Lincoln Park was created. Five households were shown on the 1879 G.M. Hopkins *Map of Montgomery County*: Reuben Hill, S.R. Williams, P. Powers, Mary Festus, and Susan Hebburn. Major England was the largest white property owner. These properties and families should be researched to find their relationship to the later community of Lincoln Park.

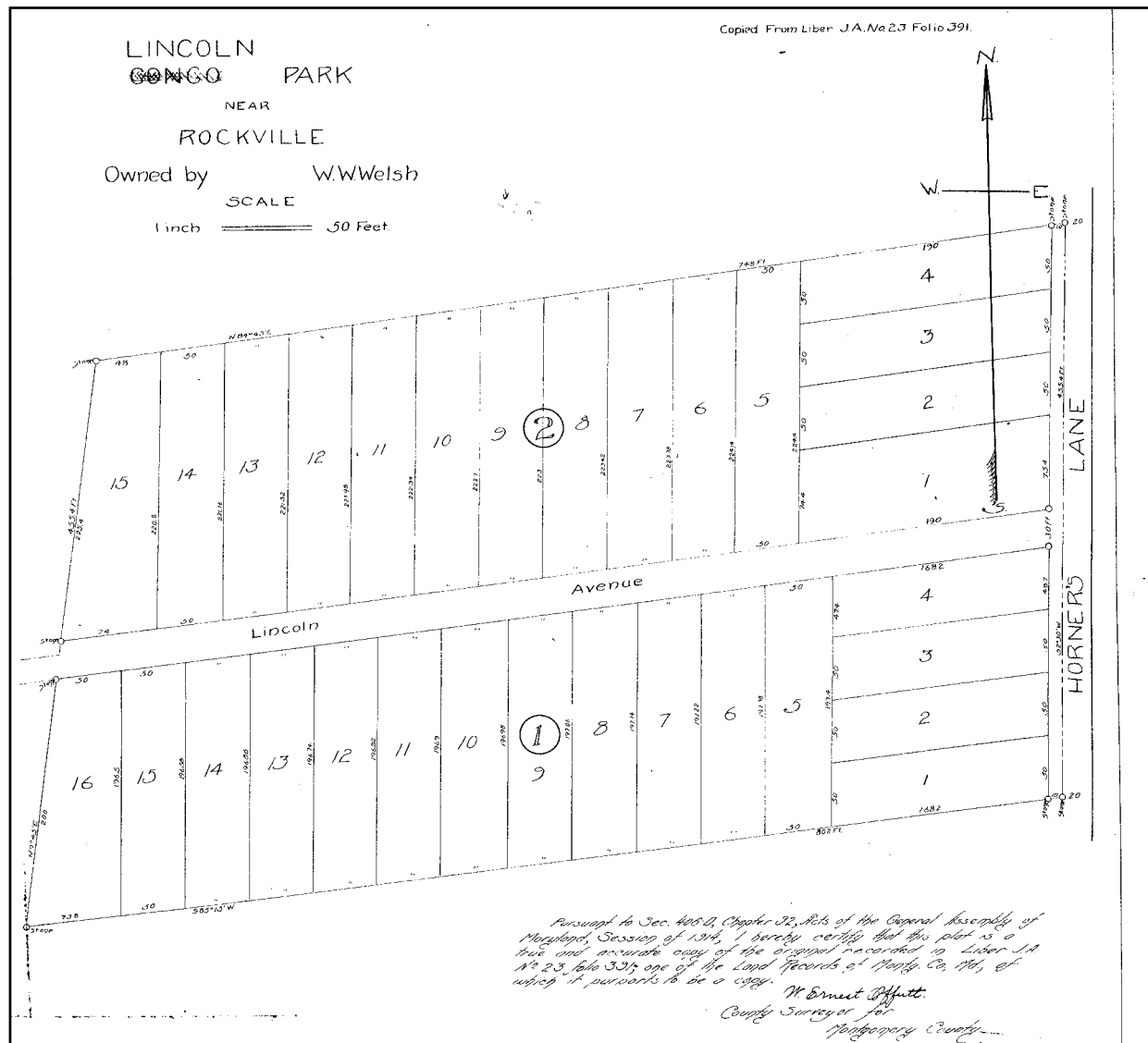


Figure 12. Lincoln Park subdivision plat (1891)

In 1890, William W. Welch bought 8.06 acres of "Valentine's Garden Enlarged" at \$100 per acre from Chandler Keys. He subdivided this into two blocks containing 31 quarter-acre lots, 50 feet wide by 200' feet deep, and sold them for \$80 each. Welch, a white man, ran a general store for over forty years in the still-extant structure now known as the Wire Hardware building on Baltimore Road. Some early residents of Lincoln Park were employees and customers of Welch's store.

Block 1 of the original subdivision had four lots fronting onto Horners Lane and 12 lots on the south side of Lincoln Avenue for a total of 16 lots. Reuben Hill's lot was adjacent

to Lot 16 but was not within the Lincoln Park subdivision plat. The house marked as owned by Susan Hebborn (Hebron) on the 1879 Hopkins map may have fallen within the Lincoln Park Plat boundaries. Most Block 1 lots were 50 feet wide by a little less than 200 feet deep, for about 10,000 square feet in area. The length was necessary because no public sewer or water was available. Septic drainage fields or dry earth fast toilets were utilized, along with wells for water.

Block 2 had four lots fronting onto Horners Lane, with Lot 1 being larger and possibly the original site of Mary Festus' house. There were 11 lots on the north side of Lincoln Avenue. These lots were 50 feet by about 220 feet, or approximately 11,000 square feet each in land area. These lots were still small, but allowed for families to grow produce and fruit trees, chickens and perhaps a few pigs. Several families may have purchased more than one lot. There were no zoning setback regulations in Montgomery County and none added as property covenants. Therefore the streetscape varies widely in setbacks, orientation, and size. Many are non-conforming by current zoning standards.

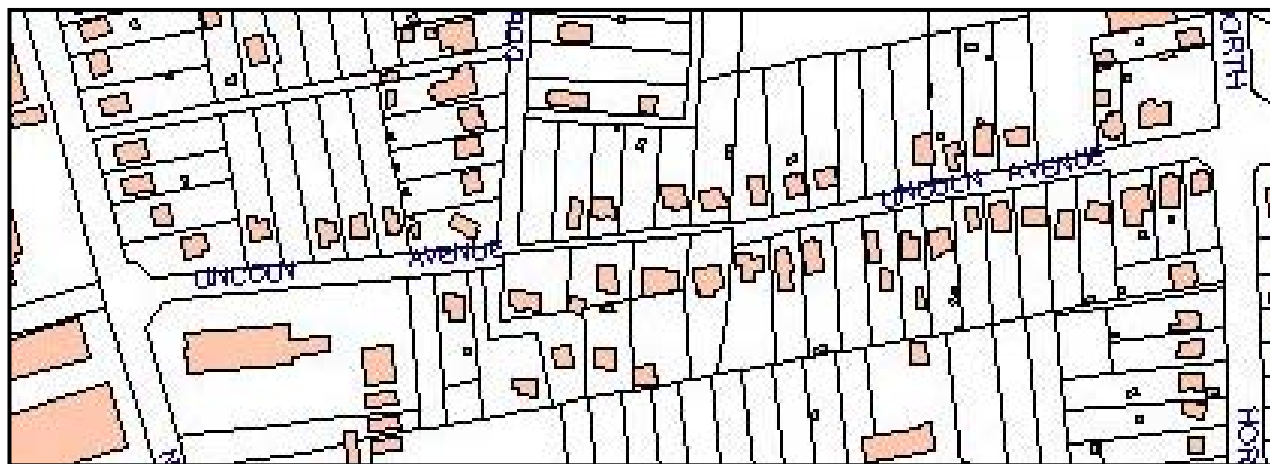


Figure 13. View of lot pattern today along Lincoln Avenue

Harrison England's First Addition to Lincoln Park subdivided a strip of land into two blocks with 22 lots. Douglas Street and seventeen lots were created north of Lincoln Avenue and one block of 5 lots was sited on the north side of Lincoln Avenue. There was an alley behind all lots. The alley was entered from Douglas Street. Solomon Williams owned a strip of land east of the First Addition.

The 130-acre Second Addition to Lincoln Park was platted by Harrison England in 1926.<sup>1</sup> It continued the First Addition subdivision adding blocks three through nine with a total of 184 lots. It created Ashley Avenue, Elizabeth Avenue, Frederick Avenue,

<sup>1</sup> Montgomery County Land Record L/f 998/196, (Feb. 1, 1922) Henrietta W. Griffin and others to Harrison L. England.

Spring Avenue and Lincoln Avenue. These lots were more varied in square footage but maintained the 50-foot lot width. Alleys were provided at the rear of the lots.

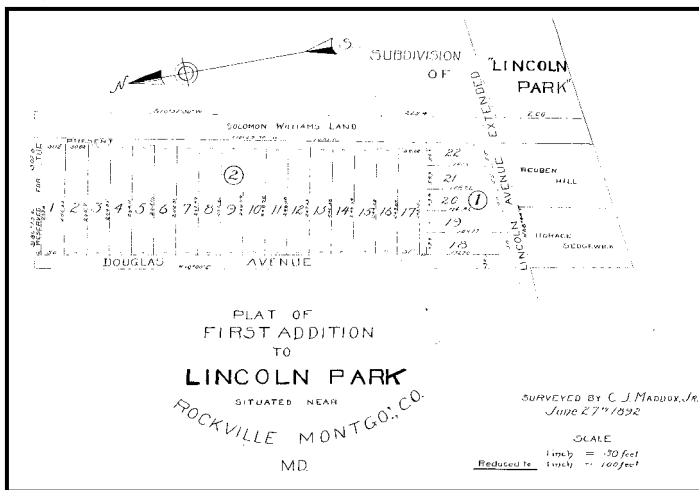


Figure 14. First Addition to Lincoln Park subdivision plat

bungalows and houses built after 1930. Due to the slow building and development of the area, the significant resources are intermingled with later infill of the 1950s to the present. However, the significance of Lincoln Park does not depend primarily on architecture. It is derived from the cultural, social, and economic factors that shaped the community and are visible in the buildings' location, setbacks, size and shape. The history of the community can be read in part through the maps and a lot and block plan of the existing community.

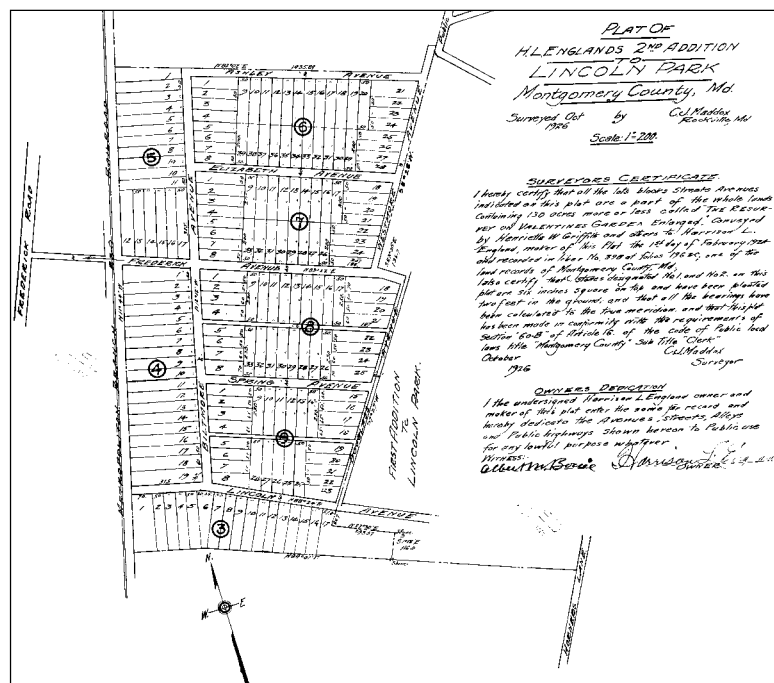


Figure 15. Second Addition to Lincoln Park plat

## History and Authority of Historic District Zoning

Efforts to preserve historic resources in Rockville relied primarily on private initiatives until 1966 when the Mayor and Council established the Historic District Commission (HDC). The HDC is composed of five commissioners appointed by the Mayor for three-year terms. Commissioners must be qualified through education, knowledge, training, or demonstrated interest in fields such as history, preservation, architecture or urban

design. The HDC is charged with recommending areas that meet the criteria for historic districts. The Annotated Code of Maryland establishes five purposes for historic designation that have been adopted by Rockville. They are:

- Safeguarding the heritage of Rockville by preserving districts that reflect cultural, social, economic, political, or architectural history;
- Stabilizing and improving property values within these districts;
- Promoting the use and preservation of historic districts for the education, welfare, and pleasure of the residents of Rockville;
- Fostering civic beauty; and
- Strengthening the local economy.

Historic district zoning is implemented through a sectional map amendment to the official City zoning map. Historic District (HD) zoning is an overlay zone defining specific historic sites and districts that reflect the cultural, social, economic, political, or architectural heritage of the City of Rockville. The underlying zone and use does not change. Only the Planning Commission or Mayor and Council may initiate sectional map amendments to implement Historic District zoning.



Figure 16. Time of Construction in Lincoln Park

### Additional Historic Preservation Tools for Neighborhood Stabilization

Although zoning is used to define lot size, the building envelope (height, setbacks) and density of a parcel of land, it does not bring building materials, design elements, or preservation of surrounding neighborhood character into the permitting process. Historic preservation defines these factors as existing characteristics to be preserved. Therefore, for neighborhood preservation, historic preservation methods and processes are the best vehicle to analyze existing communities and blend with overall zoning to produce an effective plan to stabilize, strengthen and preserve the character of the neighborhood.

The method starts with an accurate inventory and assessment of the resources or individual sites with photographs. Paired with a developmental history of the area, areas that represent developmental periods can be identified as cohesive areas of character. There are four basic tools that can be used alone or combined to suit the individual community and goals.

**National Register of Historic Places Listing** is honorary with no design review required unless federal funds or permits are involved. The National Register of Historic Places recognizes districts, buildings, structures, objects, and sites for their significance in American history, archeology, architecture, engineering, or culture, and identifies them as worthy of preservation. Under federal law, owners of private property listed in the National Register are free to maintain, manage, or dispose of their property as they choose provided that there is no Federal involvement. Established by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is a program of the U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, and is administered at the State level by the Maryland Historical Trust. Owners of properties listed in the National Register may be eligible for financial assistance for historic preservation projects, including Federal investment tax credits for rehabilitation.

Owners of properties listed in the National Register may be eligible for a 20% investment tax credit for the certified rehabilitation of income-producing certified historic structures such as commercial, industrial, or rental residential buildings. This credit can be combined with a straight-line depreciation period of 27.5 years for residential property and 31.5 years for nonresidential property for the depreciable basis of the rehabilitated building reduced by the amount of the tax credit claimed. Federal tax deductions are also available for charitable contributions for conservation purposes of partial interests in historically important land areas or structures. These tax credits can be combined with state and local tax benefits.

National Register listing does not require design review except when tax benefits or other benefits are sought. However, most local jurisdictions, including the City of Rockville, require design review for local districts. One of the best ways to keep the look and feel of a neighborhood is through a local district and design review process.

Portions of Lincoln Park were determined to be eligible for the National Register by the Maryland Historical Trust in 1991. The community qualifies as a National Register district primarily for its cultural and social history, as well as for the remaining architectural examples. National Register listing does not carry a local design review component, but does render properties eligible for local, state, and federal tax benefits and easement donations if the property owner elects to participate in these programs.

### **Local Historic Districts**

"Local historic districts are areas in which historic buildings and their settings are protected by public review. Historic district ordinances are local laws that

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are adopted by communities using powers granted by the state. Historic districts comprise the city's significant historic and architectural resources. Inclusion in a historic district signifies that a property contributes to an ensemble that is worth protecting by virtue of its historic importance or architectural quality." - City of Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The City of Rockville has adopted designation criteria based on the criteria for placement on the National Register of Historic Places: historical, cultural, architectural, and design significance. Archeological sites are also eligible. Structures representing architectural styles, periods, and methods of construction that have particular significance to Rockville are given special attention. Integrity of workmanship and materials are considered. There are no date restrictions, although federal regulations require review of structures that are 50 years of age or older when federal or state funds are utilized.

If the site is found to meet one or more of the adopted criteria, the level of site significance (local, state or national) is determined and the condition of the structure and site is evaluated. Single site historic districts are held to a higher standard than contributing sites in a historic district that overall exemplifies a particular period of history or development. After designation, any exterior changes to the property must be approved by the Historic District Commission through design review.

**Conservation Districts:** Historic designation is no longer the only option available to communities wishing to preserve and maintain the characteristics of their older neighborhoods. Beginning in the 1980s, overlay conservation districts were enabled by ordinance in many jurisdictions. These districts also seek to conserve and maintain the existing character of buildings, but generally utilize a lesser degree of regulation than is embodied in historic preservation laws. Historic District Commissions generally review details and elements such as materials, porch repair, window replacement, or siding replacement. Conservation districts may only require review of new construction, demolition, additions to buildings and rely on community approved design guidelines for the details.

**Easement Donation:** Easements are executed by the property owner and are used to gain financial advantages from a property while preserving the environmental setting. A preservation easement is a voluntary legal agreement that protects a significant historic, archaeological, or cultural resource and provides assurance that the property's intrinsic character and values will be preserved by subsequent owners. An entire historic structure or just the facade or interior may qualify. Under the terms of an easement, a property owner grants a portion of, or interest in, the property rights to an organization whose mission includes historic preservation. Once recorded, an easement becomes part of the property's chain of title and usually "runs with the land" in perpetuity.

If certain criteria are met the owner also can receive a Federal income tax deduction equivalent to the value of the property interest given away to a charitable or governmental organization and the donor may also benefit from reduced property

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assessments and reduced estate taxes. IRS criteria include documentation that the building is a “certified historic structure,” and listing in the National Register is the fastest way to meet that requirement.

An easement is a particularly useful historic preservation tool in several respects:

- First, it allows an individual to retain private ownership of the property and obtain potential financial benefits without sale.
- Second, an easement binds not only the current owner, but future owners as well, ensuring that the property will be maintained and preserved.
- Third, easements are tailored to meet the needs of the property owner, the individual resource, and the mission of the protecting organization.

### **Historic Districts And Sites In Lincoln Park**

There are currently two sites in the Lincoln Park neighborhood that are designated City of Rockville Historic Districts.

#### Lincoln High School Historic District (established 1989)

Lincoln High School is located on four acres on North Stonestreet Avenue between Lincoln and Howard Avenues. Lincoln High School is of unusual importance both to the history of Rockville and to the development of a black educational system within the Montgomery County public school system. Built in 1934, it is the oldest remaining high school and junior high building that served black students in Montgomery County. It is also one of the few surviving examples of institutional architecture styles of the mid-1930s.

#### Reuben Hill House (established 2002)

The Reuben Hill house is located on 8,276 square feet of land at 305 Lincoln Avenue. It is a single site (Landmark) Historic District. The home of Reuben Hill and Carlisle Blair Hill was occupied by four generations of the Hill family, one of the pioneer families in the community. One of the oldest surviving and intact structures in Lincoln Park, the original four room vernacular dwelling house was constructed in 1880 before the subdivision of Lincoln Park was created. Additions and improvements to the original house were done about 1917 and all modifications since that time are considered reversible. The house is a large prosperous house and not typical of the modest vernacular houses and rental properties built in the early years of Lincoln Park and Montgomery County.

A number of sites in Lincoln Park were inventoried and photographed in 1986 as a single sheet “windshield” survey. In 1993, a community history and architectural survey were completed, which resulted in an exhibit and community history of Lincoln Park. The collected research and oral histories are extant.

Four sites have been researched and recorded on Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) Historic Sites Inventory forms, including:

The Cooke House – 1894-95, 302 Lincoln Avenue  
Lincoln High School – 1935, Stonestreet and Frederick Avenue  
Reuben Hill House – 1880, 305 Lincoln Avenue  
Harriss House and Hicks Barber Shop – ca. 1940, 311 Lincoln

There are no properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places located in Lincoln Park.

### **Survey Initiative for Lincoln Park**

The survey of Planning Area 6 will include the development of a context, which will identify themes specific to Lincoln Park's history, based on the *Standards and Guidelines for Architectural and Historical Investigations in Maryland*, developed by the Maryland Historical Trust. Possible themes include African-American social and cultural histories, slavery, the subdivision process, developers, City annexation process, Community planning efforts that focus on infrastructure and connections, architecture, social history and transportation. Historic research of these themes, the evaluation of individual buildings, and an assessment of archaeological potential will be undertaken. Survey forms for individual properties will include photography and architectural descriptions. An outline of the process is as follows:

- 1) Survey Initiative for Lincoln Park
  - a) Goals
    - i) Collect data and provide evaluation of historic resources
    - ii) Assess archaeological potential
    - iii) Review Lincoln Park neighborhood and determine eligibility for potential historic designation.
  - b) Process
    - i) Staff survey – Historical research, field survey of individual properties, data collection and analysis
    - ii) Public Meetings – Providing input on boundaries, individual sites, and design guidelines
  - c) Product
    - i) Context – The historical overview of the project area
    - ii) Themes: Agricultural origins to early subdivisions, subdivision and developers, annexations into the City of Rockville, Architecture, community planning and development (infrastructure, connections), social history, transportation.

- iii) Survey – Property by property field survey, including deed research on selected properties
- iv) Design Guidelines
- v) Boundary Recommendations

2) Proposed Schedule

- i) Staff time
- ii) Public meetings

**Recommendations**

- Protect Lincoln Park's physical and cultural heritage and encourage future community stability through historic preservation tools.
- Perform in-depth historical and architectural survey of Lincoln Park.
- Select historic preservation and planning tools to achieve Master Plan goal after a public involvement process with the neighborhood.
- Prepare nomination form(s) for selected preservation projects.
- Publish educational materials for public distribution, including brochures, historical plaques, maps and histories.

## Benefits of Local Historic Districts

- Local districts protect the investments of owners and residents. Buyers know that the aspects that make a particular area attractive will be protected over a period of time. Real estate agents in many cities use historic district status as a marketing tool to sell properties.
- Local districts encourage better design. It has been shown through comparative studies that there is a greater sense of relatedness, more innovative use of materials, and greater public appeal within historic districts than in areas without historic designations.
- Local districts help the environment. Historic district revitalization can, and should, be part of a comprehensive environmental policy.
- The educational benefits of creating local districts are the same as those derived from any historic preservation effort. Districts help explain the development of a place, the source of inspiration, and technological advances. They are a record of ourselves and our communities.
- A local district can result in a positive economic impact from tourism. A historic district that is aesthetically cohesive and well promoted can be a community's most important attraction. The retention of historic areas as a way to attract tourist dollars makes good economic sense.
- The protection of local historic districts can enhance business recruitment potential. Companies continually re-locate to communities that offer their workers a higher quality of life, which is greatly enhanced by successful local preservation programs and stable historic districts.
- Local districts provide social and psychological benefits. A sense of empowerment and confidence develops when community decisions are made through a structured participatory process rather than behind closed doors or without public comment.

Excerpted and adapted from *Maintaining Community Character: How to Establish a Local Historic District* by Pratt Cassity. National Trust for Historic Preservation. 2000.

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## **Chapter 4: TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION**

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**Goal: Establish circulation patterns and opportunities, including vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian and public transit, which protect the residential nature of the Lincoln Park neighborhood.**

### **Objectives**

1. Use a neighborhood traffic calming strategy to control non-residential traffic on neighborhood streets.
2. Develop alternative vehicular connections to major highways such as Route 355 and Gude Drive.
3. Reduce the level of noise associated with vehicular traffic.
4. Provide Ride-On service that is responsive to neighborhood-based approaches to transit operations.
5. Enforce existing traffic laws and restrictions to reduce the impacts of existing neighborhood traffic.
7. Develop safety measures to be implemented in conjunction with the development of all transportation modes to ensure safe travel for residents.

### **Introduction**

As an established residential area with development dating from the 1850's, the Lincoln Park neighborhood's transportation network has evolved from its semi-rural origins, its unique relationship to Rockville Town Center, its close proximity to the Metro/railroad tracks, and a variety of bordering non-residential land uses. Because the neighborhood was established prior to modern road construction practices, many streets were reconstructed within the existing narrow rights-of-way after the construction of housing. Today, the dominant circulation patterns found within the neighborhood reflect a series of shifts in surrounding transportation systems that have altered residents' access to different parts of the city. This has created a series of challenges to enhancing both the accessibility and service of various modes of transportation and warrants an examination of how connectivity within the neighborhood and beyond Lincoln Park can be enhanced. This chapter provides an overview of current issues such as non-local cut-through traffic and connections to adjacent areas, and offers strategies for creating the transportation network best suited for residents.

At the Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan Community Kickoff Meeting, access to mass transportation was rated among the neighborhood's most important strengths and reasons to live in Lincoln Park. Access to the Rockville Metro Station was specifically

mentioned as an important asset, as well as access to both Metro and Ride-On bus service.

Traffic was regularly mentioned as a problem experienced by residents. In particular, commercial cut-through traffic along Stonestreet Avenue and North Horners Lane were cited as major concerns. Other weaknesses included the increase in the parking of abandoned vehicles, large trucks and other commercial vehicles, often parked overnight in the neighborhood.

## **Existing Conditions**

### **Vehicular Circulation**

The neighborhood of Lincoln Park is generally defined by Ashley Avenue to the north, North Horners Lane to the east, North Stonestreet Avenue to the west and Lincoln Avenue to the south. Residents have identified the problems associated with traffic passing through the neighborhood as stemming from vehicles moving along these boundary road systems. In terms of land use, industrial businesses operating on the adjacent properties of the primary roadways of North Horners Lane and North Stonestreet Avenue, have created daily non-residential traffic flow along each. Easy access to downtown Rockville, as well as connections to Gude Drive and points beyond via North Horners Lane, has made that roadway an ideal short cut for commuter traffic. The close proximity to both the Southlawn industrial area and Town Center as major employment centers have exposed the neighborhood to long hours of commuter back-ups, hazardous pedestrian conditions on secondary residential streets as well as parking encroachments by commercial vehicles. Connection to major highways such as MD 355 and Gude Drive is facilitated by the linking of North Horners Lane to the segments of Park Road, Southlawn Lane and Dover Road.

All streets within Lincoln Park have one (1) ton commercial vehicle restrictions in place, with the exception of North Horners Lane between Ashley Avenue and Southlawn Lane and along the entire segment of North Stonestreet Avenue south of Frederick Avenue. Commercial vehicles are also allowed on the portion of Spring Avenue between North Stonestreet Avenue and Lenmore Avenue. While these measures have been taken to restrict non-local traffic accessing residential streets, residents have indicated that these vehicles routinely ignore the restrictions.

### **Local Circulation Impacts**

North Horners Lane is a primary neighborhood street for both East Rockville and Lincoln Park. Average Daily Weekday Traffic counts indicate that between 3,575 and 5,125 vehicles use North Horners Lane each day between Southlawn Lane and Westmore Avenue. This road segment functions as an access route to the Westmore Industrial Park. Although North Horners Lane borders Lincoln Park, over 350 trucks use the segment north of Southlawn Lane and 200 trucks use Frederick Avenue.

Frederick Avenue is a local neighborhood street with single-family housing and two industrial and warehouse buildings adjacent the WMATA/CSX tracks. Along the segment between Johnson Drive and North Horners Lane, the street carries an average 1,600 trips per day with 200 accounting for truck traffic. Although many homes along Frederick Avenue have been set back from street curbs by fifty (50) feet or more, complaints about street noise continue. Frederick Avenue is almost a direct connection to Dover Road and the Southlawn Industrial Park along Gude Drive from North Stonestreet Avenue, and it appears from the average daily trips generated on North Stonestreet Avenue that traffic uses Frederick Avenue as a connector to this industrial area. This is noted in an increase in average vehicle trips at the intersection of both roads from 900 to 2,150 on North Stonestreet Avenue and an increase of 1,600 average trips produced at the intersection of Frederick Avenue and North Horners Lane, while secondary roads in between generate a combined peak of 725 trips. The neighborhood continues to suffer large amounts of non-local traffic despite its primary residential character and corresponding secondary residential roadways because of its proximity and connections between the Southlawn Industrial Park and MD 355 via the primary roadways surrounding the neighborhood. While these conditions do exist, average daily trip data also shows a reduction in trips on alternative parallel streets such as Lincoln Avenue.

North Stonestreet Avenue has three different road classifications between Ashley Avenue and Park Road. This includes the segment between Park Road and Lincoln Avenue, which is considered a primary industrial road; the segment between Lincoln Avenue and Frederick Avenue, which is referred to as a primary residential II; and the secondary residential road segment between Frederick Avenue and Ashley Avenue. Industrial uses predominate in the corridor northward from Park Road to Spring Street, where single-family housing begins. Although this street was designed to carry more traffic there are up to 2,100 trips daily with 220 to 300 trucks. This compares with a secondary residential street such as Frederick Avenue and a primary residential street like North Horners Lane. North Stonestreet Avenue also has a narrow forty five-foot, variable right-of-way that does not allow adequate space for sidewalks. The avenue functions as a commercial collector with most of its traffic directly attributable to activities occurring on property owned by the Montgomery County Board of Education which requires delivery vehicles to either use Frederick Road to get to Gude Drive despite one-ton weight restrictions or to go south to Park Road and connect to MD 355.

The residential streets of Lincoln Avenue, Spring Avenue, Elizabeth Avenue and Ashley Avenue carry average residential traffic levels between 300 and 700 trips per day with very few trucks. The lack of significant cut-through traffic along these segments may be attributable to their function as servicing residents only with little east/west or north/south connections to other roadways adjoining the neighborhood. Many homes along these roads are close to street edges and have front porches that are sensitive to traffic noise.

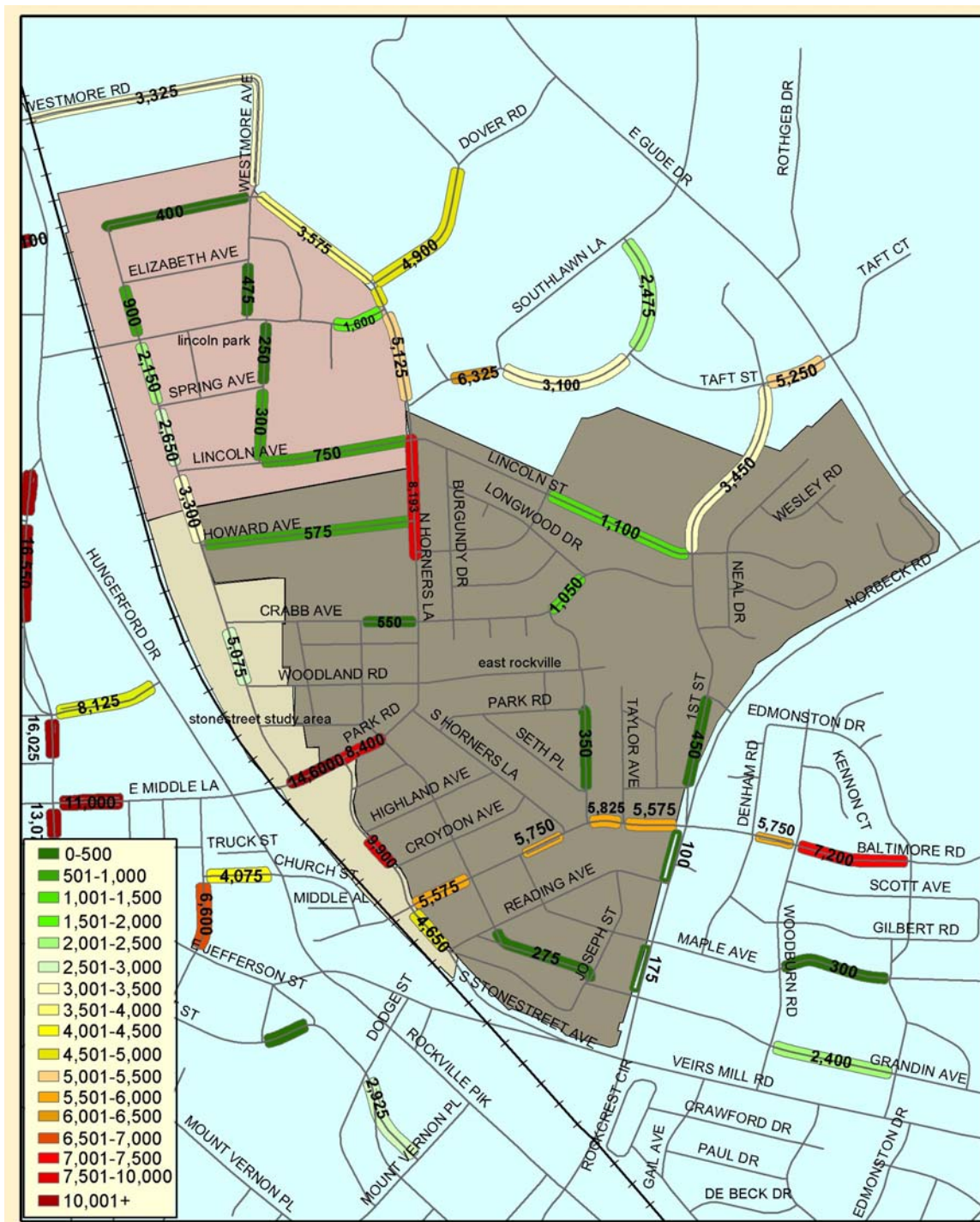


Figure 17. Total Average Daily Weekday Traffic, 2000-2002

Traffic data compiled by the Transportation Division indicates that traffic counts are heaviest on perimeter roadways surrounding Lincoln Park. North Horners Lane is the best example of a street with significant cut-through traffic, with over 8,000 trips on the segment between Southlawn Lane and Pinewood Road. This local street is a primary residential I classification between Park Road and Dover Road, and primary industrial between Dover Road and Westmore Avenue. Traffic drops to 5,000 trips north of the Southlawn Lane intersection with a majority of those trips directed to either Westmore Road or to Gude Drive by way of Dover Road.

### **Pedestrian Network and Bikeways**

While there is considerable emphasis on vehicular traffic patterns, walkability within Lincoln Park tends to be regarded by residents as very high. All roadways in the neighborhood have sidewalk facilities on at least one side. Along both Lenmore Avenue and Moore Drive there are sidewalks on each side of the existing streets. All streets within the subdivision of England's Second Addition to Lincoln Park intersect with North Stonestreet Avenue; yet due to the industrial nature of businesses, there are no pedestrian crosswalks. Along the entire length of Lincoln Avenue there are sidewalks on both sides of the roadway. The majority of this road segment is comprised of the Lincoln Park and the 1<sup>st</sup> Addition to Lincoln Park subdivisions. Industrial properties to the east and north of the neighborhood do not have sidewalks on North Horners Lane. However, properties from Frederick Avenue to Lincoln Avenue do have a complete sidewalk system. A newly-installed crosswalk exists on North Horners Lane at the intersection of Lincoln Avenue.

Unity Bridge, located at the terminus of Frederick Avenue at the WMATA/CSX tracks, provides pedestrian and bicycle connection to Rockville Town Center and MD 355 from Lincoln Park. The crossing features switch-back ramps that allow for pedestrian, bike, and handicap accessibility. Formerly known as the North Rockville Pedestrian Bridge, the overpass underwent renovations in 1999, including security improvements such as new lighting and surveillance cameras, the addition of decorative fence and railings to replace chain link caging, an overhead opening, and a remodeling of the entrance plazas to make them more inviting.

The 2004 Bikeway Master Plan outlines both existing and proposed pathways that will be used to continue construction of the bikeway system throughout the City. Within Lincoln Park, the designation of signed-shared bike facilities have been proposed on North Stonestreet Avenue and Ashley Avenue, with a connection along the entire segment of Frederick Avenue from its intersection with North Horners Lane toward Unity Bridge. Signage would be used to indicate shared lanes for use by both vehicles and bikes. A striped delineation between facilities would occur along the entire segment of North Horners Lane. This would connect with off-street shared-use paths along both Dover Road and Southlawn Lane, creating separate bike and vehicle facilities. These links would connect bikeways within Lincoln Park to the larger system outside the neighborhood.

## Mass Transit

Both rail and bus transit service is available to residents of Lincoln Park. The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) owns and operates the Rockville Metro Station located just south of the neighborhood. Featuring metrorail connection to regional activity centers, the station is also a connection point for MARC commuter rail service provided by the Maryland Transit Administration, as well as Amtrak passenger rail service. Metrobus transit routes along Frederick Avenue, North Horner Lane and North Stonestreet Avenue connect to the Rockville Station transit center linking it to a larger network that includes routes to the Rockville Town Center to the west and Gude Drive to the east. In addition, Ride-On bus service provided by Montgomery County manages these same routes and provides connections to WMATA facilities. Many residents have complained that buses along these roads travel at speeds that compromise the safety of pedestrians and other vehicles within the neighborhood. The large-size vehicles passing through have been characterized as having played a significant role in the increased noise levels along surrounding residential streets. Off duty buses have also been reported to use the cut-through connection of North Horner Lane to access Rockville Station and Gude Drive rather than using the required Norbeck Road/MD 28 routes.



Figure 18. Ride-On and Transit Services within Lincoln Park

## Parking

Vehicles are allowed to park along secondary and primary residential streets within Lincoln Park. These account for all streets both within and on the periphery of Lincoln Park with the exception of North Stonestreet at Lincoln Avenue to its intersection with Park Road which is classified as primary industrial. Residents have commented on an increasing number of commuters parking vehicles on these roadways and walking to Rockville Metro Station. There has also been an increased presence in the number of commercial vehicles that park within the neighborhood.

## Critical Issues

### Johnson Drive

Residents had consistently indicated a clear preference for paving Johnson Drive, which was an unpaved private street off Frederick Avenue. The Department of Public Works completed paving the street to a sufficient width to allow for two-way traffic.

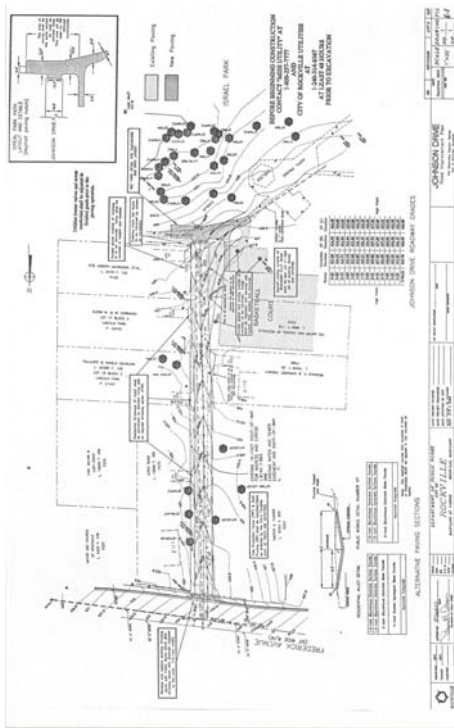


Figure 19. Johnson Drive Improvement Plan

would allow for appropriate buffering to be developed between each use, as well as prevent any increase in vehicle travel along Ashley Avenue. Pedestrian facilities would also have to be examined for connectivity to new development in relation to transit bus service as well.

The property would continue to be a private street with ingress/egress for the eight lots that abut it. The plans included the realignment of Israel Park's entrance, removal of pavement adjacent to the location of existing basketball courts, connection of paths, and establishing a private road for vehicles accessing Israel Park.

### WINX Property Development

With the prospect of the WINX Property developing for residential use there have been questions regarding the ingress and egress for additional vehicles and its impact on residents. Although the property is bordered by Ashley Avenue on its south, there is a concern that utilizing this street for access to the property would negatively impact homeowners. Residents along this road have been able to maintain relatively quiet conditions on Ashley Avenue, with the exception of some commercial traffic from the nearby industrial area. Residents would prefer the primary access point for the WINX property to be located on its eastern border along Westmore Avenue. This



Figure 20. WINX property

### North Stonestreet Residential/Mix-Use Transition

While it has been agreed that North Stonestreet should be developed for a mixture of retail, office, and residential uses, it is within a border region between the planning areas of Lincoln Park and East Rockville. It is important to understand how this road segment of North Stonestreet could be utilized to create appropriate circulation patterns for traffic generated from mixed-use development south of Howard Avenue as well as establish physical elements to be used to identify this transition area. The East Rockville

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Neighborhood Plan (2004) recommends there be a traffic circle placed between Lincoln and Howard Avenue for this purpose. A calming circle in this location would be used to allow vehicles primarily traveling North Stonestreet Avenue for access to its mixed-use corridor the ability to return toward Park Avenue without traveling into the residential areas of Lincoln Park. Functionally this would circulate traffic back onto the roadway from which it came creating additional vehicle trips that may be unnecessary. This is also assuming that traffic wouldn't continue north into Lincoln Park, which is also of concern. The design of a street segment abutting the WMATA/CSX tracks may provide a way in which to alleviate this problem. By creating a north/south circulation pattern that can take traffic generated by uses on North Stonestreet and deliver it back toward the east/west connection of Park Road, vehicles could travel without creating unnecessary burdens on North Stonestreet Avenue. This strategy could take advantage of the proposed calming circle to facilitate movement in the desired pattern as well. This could also be used to strengthen further traffic calming measures along the primary residential segments north of Lincoln Avenue. Within this framework, the traffic circle would become an integral part of a larger circulation system.

### **East/West Vehicular Connection**

The lack of east-west vehicular connections across the Metro/CSX tracks have compounded the problems of Lincoln Park's proximity to Rockville Town Center and the Southlawn Industrial Area. The effects of cut-through traffic and increased travel times warrant examination of possible alternative connections that facilitate better circulation patterns both in and around Lincoln Park and East Rockville. One possible alternative connection could be near the intersection of Westmore Road with the WMATA/CSX tracks. While it is unclear what type of connection would be feasible from an engineering perspective, the ability of such a system to divert east/west circulation from neighborhood streets would go a long way toward reducing cut-through traffic impacts on the neighborhood. A new approach to delivering both pedestrian and vehicular traffic across the WMATA/CSX tracks to Route 355 and beyond may be encouraged at other locations if they alleviate impacts on the neighborhood's existing situation.

### **Southlawn Industrial Area**

The 1984 Lincoln Park Plan indicates a desire to cul-de-sac Southlawn Lane at its intersection with North Horners Lane if there was an east/west connection established with Route 355. While this was in lieu of the closed connection created by Frederick Road, it represents a wider view of the issue in terms of traffic generated by the connection of the Southlawn Industrial area to Lincoln Park. The development of a Southlawn Study Area would address these circulation issues and update them by recommendation of this plan.

## Transit Bus Service

While Lincoln Park benefits from both WMATA and Montgomery County Ride-on bus transit service, residents deal with a host of issues stemming from the routes utilized by these services including noise, pollution, and safety concerns. Although there are an adequate number of stops within the neighborhood, many of these facilities have not been upgraded to include seating and shelters, although it is likely that new shelters will be installed in the near future. A lack of east/west vehicular circulation has the effect of isolating residents from a road network that can help residents access activity centers like Town Center in an efficient manner. While bus routes create these connections, existing routes are linked to larger systems that function to move the most amount of people over distances greater than those points in the immediate vicinity of Lincoln Park. A shuttle bus service could be used to create an internal transit loop for both East Rockville and Lincoln Park that serves to deliver residents of each neighborhood to destination points such as the Regal Cinema, Montgomery County Courthouse, and Rockville Metro Station. Shuttle service is recommended along the new North Stonestreet Boulevard, reaching the traffic circle between Howard and Lincoln Avenues near the former Lincoln High School. This location could serve as a bus stop complete with seating and shelter improvements.

## North Horners Lane Pedestrian Safety

Residents of the Lincoln Park community have expressed frustration regarding traffic speed, industrial vehicles, and cut-through traffic on North Horners Lane. In particular, the portions of roadway between Crabb Avenue and Lincoln Ave have often been cited as in need of retrofitting for pedestrian safety. In September, 2003, the City's Department of Transportation met with residents to provide the results of a collaborative safety project between the City and neighborhood involving traffic calming measures to be considered as part of an ongoing improvements along North Horners Lane.

The City then installed landscaped medians and striped crosswalks at the intersections of North Horners Lane and Crabb, Pinewood, and Lincoln Avenues. The medians provide a safe refuge to cross the two-way traffic, allowing pedestrians to negotiate one direction of traffic at a time. The marking of pedestrian crosswalks inform vehicle traffic of shared areas and facilitate safe



*Figure 21. North Horners Lane pedestrian safety measures*

connection of one side of the roadway with the other. A drawback that raises concern is that approximately 4 to 6 on-street parking spaces have been eliminated around each intersection to accommodate the widened medians.

### Street Edge Tree Canopy

The ability of street trees to block viewsheds of larger buildings in Rockville Town Center seen from Lincoln Park is heavily dependent on the amount of space that is available within the public right-of-way for vehicular and pedestrian facilities. In many instances, the ability to create an area for street tree plantings has been constrained by development of roads and sidewalks after development patterns had already been established, leaving much of the area available for creating an urban tree canopy on private property only. With the use of traffic calming measures, however, this pattern may be able to be reversed to some extent. Projects that include street narrowing by creating bump-outs can essentially reclaim the area needed within public rights-of-way for tree planting. By utilizing this component of traffic calming strategies residents could advance the goals of maintaining and expanding the urban tree canopy in the neighborhood.

### Transportation Network

The following map graphically represents the framework used to evaluate transportation networks for vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle travel in the general area of Lincoln Park. Because of its association with both existing and proposed conditions, some of the elements shown are in preparation of future conditions and how they would be used to complement and modify the dominant circulation systems found in the neighborhood today.

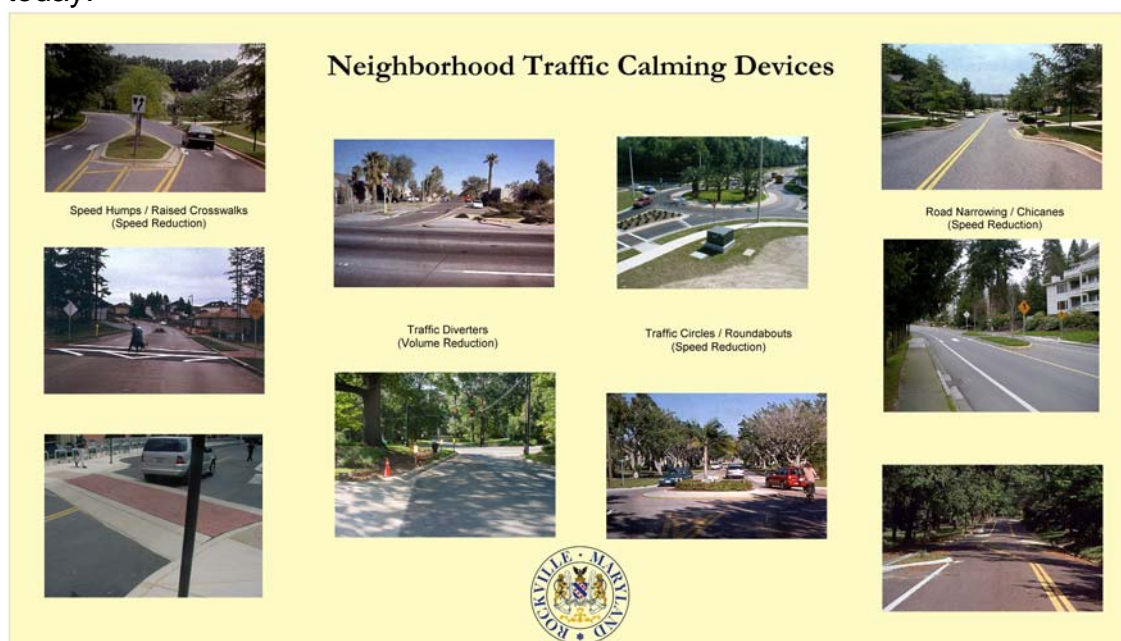


Figure 22. Illustration of a variety of neighborhood traffic calming devices. (Source: City of Rockville Transportation Division)

Transportation gateways are areas that represent critical connections to destination points. They also account for, in some cases, the convergence of different forms of transportation facilities that would be prioritized as points of extension for specific systems as well as the safe transition of residents from one to the other. All gateways, with the exception of the possible east/west vehicular link to Route 355 from Westmore Avenue, are located along entry points to all major pedestrian spines. These spines facilitate movement from one area to another, and because of their correlation with sidewalk facilities; act as an indicator of prioritized improvements to the pedestrian network.

The map also indicates where routes for bus transit have been established by location of bus stops. Those in close proximity to gateways throughout the area would be preferred locations for improvements. The proposed bikeways signal an overlapping of facilities for various modes of transportation. These locations for pedestrian, bicycle and bus transit facilities offer opportunities to create synergistic conditions whereby residents are offered connective movement to different areas without reliance on vehicular travel.

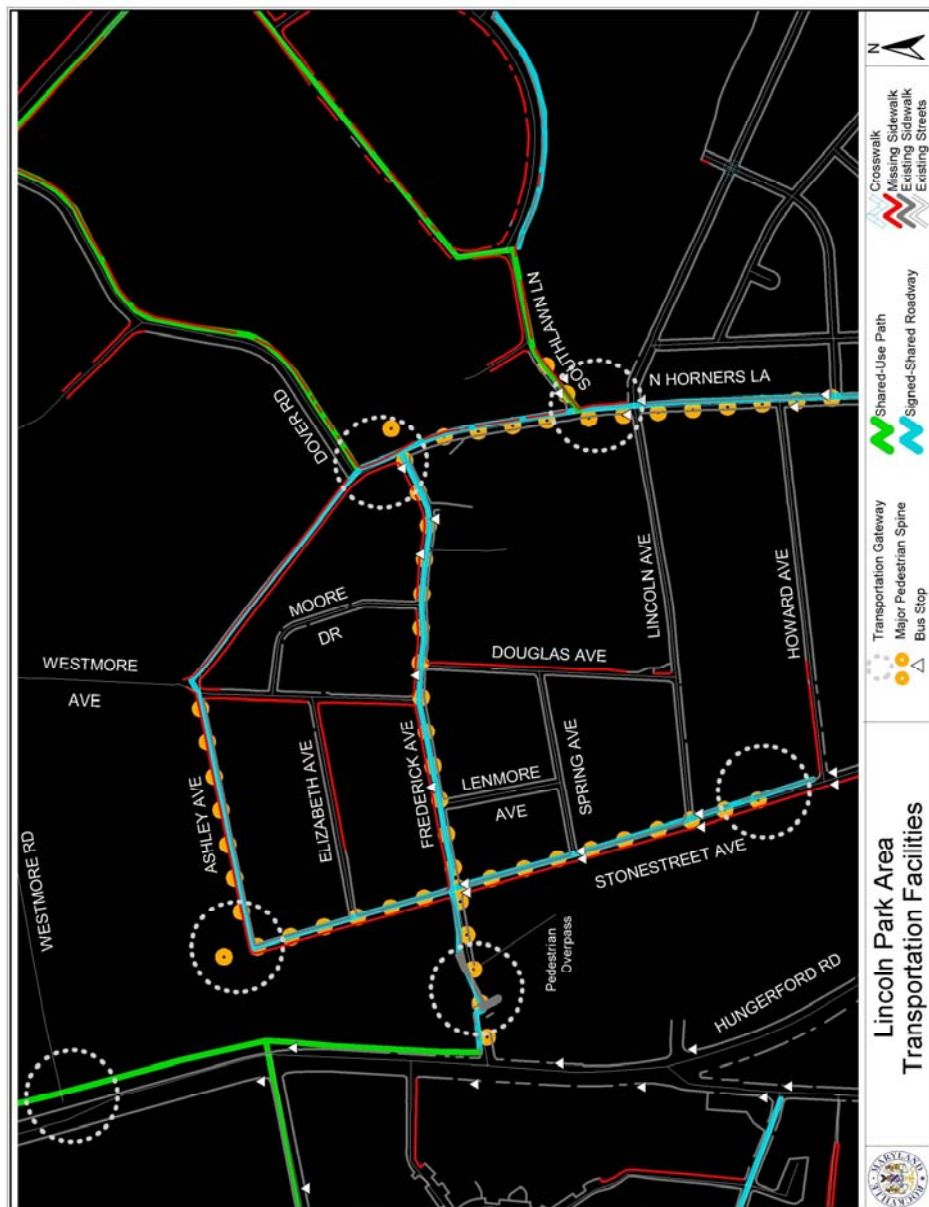


Figure 23. Neighborhood Transportation Facilities

## Recommendations

In efforts to improve safety and access to pedestrian, bike, and vehicle facilities, the following areas should be made priority for the enhancement of the transportation network:

- Development of the WINX property should include at least two ingress/egress roadways. Access from Ashley Avenue should be minimized.
- Reconfigure the Westmore Avenue/North Horners Lane/Ashley Avenue intersection, including appropriate signage or restricting the times that turns can be made.
- Study the impact of industrial cut-through traffic, and develop potential solutions to minimize it. Potential solutions include redirecting industrial traffic away from the neighborhood through restricted turning movements on Southlawn Lane so that industrial traffic is directed to Gude Drive. Another potential alternative would involve connecting Westmore Road to MD 355 as an alternative access,
- The City should continue to monitor and maintain Unity Bridge,
- Implement traffic calming measures where appropriate, including on North Horners Lane, and North Stonestreet Avenue, among others,
- Implement bus stop improvements to areas as mapped out in this plan. These areas should also feature information about both Metro and Ride-On bus services including routes, fees, and links to other mass transit lines. This could be achieved through electric improvements as well for display of information. The Lincoln Park Community Center should also become a drop off point for material on these public services.
- Implement pedestrian safety measures and features to ensure all residents can access nearby activity centers, both within and outside the neighborhood.
- Maintain Johnson Drive as a paved roadway section.
- Upon the redevelopment of the North Stonestreet corridor, reconfigure circulation patterns so that traffic generated by the core of mixed uses is allowed to return toward the east/west connection of Park Road without generating unnecessary trips on North Stonestreet.
- Create an inventory of streetlights within Lincoln Park to be used for assessing appropriate overhead lighting improvements to be considered in addressing improvements to transportation facilities.
- Encourage the use of permit parking on primary and secondary residential streets to minimize the threat of parking encroachments.



Figure 24. Ride On buses in Metro station bus bays

- Recommend study and amendment to Bikeway Master Plan to review alternative connections between Unity Bridge and Town Center redevelopment area to create a “mini-loop” trail with Lincoln Park.
- Recommend a study of the Southlawn Industrial Area to include a comprehensive analysis of circulation patterns in all modes of transportation and develop alternatives for both internal and external circulation patterns for connectivity to Lincoln Park.

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## **Chapter 5: THE ENVIRONMENT**

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**Goal: Achieve a healthy, vibrant, and sustainable natural environment in the neighborhood that protects, preserves and restores natural resources, while reducing or eliminating environmental problems that affect current and future residents.**

### **Objectives**

1. Enhance and preserve community livability and local environmental quality.
2. Protect and improve the condition of existing green space and natural areas and provide adequate public green/open space for the future with both passive and active recreational opportunities.
3. Promote watershed awareness and water pollution prevention as part of the neighborhood's connection to Rock Creek.
4. Encourage sustainable development and redevelopment practices that promote energy efficiency, reduce the consumption of raw materials, and integrate historical preservation principles.
5. Provide educational opportunities and promote the active involvement of local residents in improving the local neighborhood environment and larger ecosystem.

**What is a sustainable neighborhood?** How does this concept relate to the environment?

Sustainability in the context of land use and the built environment can be defined as the efficient use and integration of renewable resources and land use policies to ensure prosperous social and economic living patterns without exhausting available resources. The concept of sustainability has emerged in response to increasing awareness that the ways in which our communities function can profoundly affect our consumption of natural resources, and that to meet the challenges of the future in protecting air quality, water quality and finite natural resources, communities must focus efforts starting at the local level. Actions such as promoting pedestrian access, alternative transit types, "green building" techniques, and neighborhood gardens are just a few examples.

The same measures that can be taken to promote energy efficiency, make better use of natural resources, and reduce pollution will also promote social, economic and cultural values that define "quality of life" in our community. It is through this integration of environmental, social, economic and cultural values that "sustainable neighborhoods" as well as sustainability for future generations can be achieved.

6. Maintain and enhance the following services important to the neighborhood: Neighborhood resources, community facilities, recreation and parks, police.
7. The neighborhood should receive an appropriate level of social services, but should not be a target for those services.

## Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the existing environmental setting and natural resources of Lincoln Park and establishes a vision and plan for the future environmental condition of the neighborhood and its relationship to the larger community and ecosystem. This plan recommends the pursuit of sustainable practices to improve the neighborhood both within its boundaries and beyond. Establishing an environmental vision stretching over a twenty-year time period opens up challenges to look beyond what is currently accepted, and anticipating what local and regional challenges may be encountered.

The planning horizon encompasses new requirements that the City must meet in protecting water quality, particularly nutrient reductions in runoff, and reducing and eliminating illicit discharges to the stormdrain system. Statewide and local efforts are also focusing on ways to better utilize “green building” practices in order to reduce energy consumption and limit construction waste in the building process.

## Current Conditions

The Lincoln Park neighborhood is located in the upper section of a tributary to Rock Creek. The neighborhood is comprised of mostly single-family homes and several two- and three-story apartment buildings. The community is essentially fully developed, with new development within the neighborhood to be limited to several in-fill lots. Some

### Critical Issues

The neighborhood was developed before today’s requirements for stormwater management and conveyance. The extensive urban tree canopy in the neighborhood provides an asset to the community by providing summer shade and cooling, helping to slow runoff, and providing local air quality improvements. Large mature trees throughout the community also help to screen views of adjacent areas. However, much of the mature tree canopy is on private property, with limited area of public right-of-way for additional street trees.

The future vision for the neighborhood will provide for an environmental setting that enhances the quality of life for local residents, including addressing drainage problems, and finding acceptable means of preserving the mature tree canopy. A balance must be achieved between the desire to maintain the benefits of a mature tree canopy, while alleviating some of the maintenance and financial burden to individual property owners.

changes to the physical setting of the neighborhood will come through redevelopment of individual properties and homeowner improvements, while other larger-scale changes will occur as redevelopment occurs as recommended in this plan. This presents the opportunity for gradual improvement in the built environment, through the correction of drainage problems, improvements to landscaping and the urban tree canopy, and the opportunity to promote energy-efficient building techniques. The community is bordered by industrial uses on three sides that create noise issues and impact the neighborhood by attracting cut-through truck traffic.

## **Urban Forestry**

The tree canopy in Lincoln Park consists primarily of oaks and tulip poplars with a number of large Norway Spruce, hemlocks, and pines that provide screening. The average age of many of the larger trees is in the 50 – 80 year range and several of the larger trees are much older. Many of the more significant trees in the community are on private property and present a maintenance issue for homeowners, as well as creating less certainty that the trees will remain. Current City law allows the removal of individual trees on private lots, regardless of the size of the tree. The urban tree canopy is an important natural resource in the community. Without it, the sense of separation between the neighborhood and Town Center would be significantly diminished. The urban canopy also reduces summer temperatures, improves local air quality, and improves the efficiency of residential cooling systems.

## **Recommendations**

- Develop technical and funding assistance and educational programs to aid homeowners in caring for and replacing existing aging trees on private property.
- Conduct urban tree canopy gap analysis and targeted plan for neighborhood street tree and private urban forest management.
- Establish an acceptable mix of tree types in the City's street tree replacement plan for the neighborhood that provides for screening evergreen species in key locations for screening views into the Town Center.
- Coordinate drainage improvements with tree protection needs and street tree planting plans.

## **Air Quality and Noise**

Air quality is most frequently addressed as a regional issue due to the widespread pollutant generation and dispersion characteristics of most air pollutants. However, air quality can also be a discrete neighborhood issue. Local air quality can be affected by diesel exhaust from buses and trucks, particularly when idling. The close proximity of the Metro and CSX rail systems puts pressure on local neighborhood roads from

commuter trips and bus-routes, contributing to increased local air quality issues in the neighborhood as well as contributing to noise levels.

As Town Center and Metro redevelopment proceeds, additional pressure will be placed on local roads to accommodate the new travel demands. New traffic calming measures that are in place will help to slow cut-through traffic. While additional bus capacity to alleviate congestion is desirable from a regional transportation perspective, the impacts to the local community must be addressed. Cleaner, quieter and more energy efficient buses, and more diverse transit types can provide a solution.

### **Recommendations**

- Restrict buses traveling through neighborhood to in-service only.
- Conduct an environmental effects analysis and mitigation plan to address noise and air quality impacts of proposed Metrobus and Ride-on expansion and new traffic generation.
- Pursue strategies to relieve traffic congestion in order to reduce vehicle idling time and associated air quality impacts.
- Promote alternative fuel public transportation vehicles on neighborhood streets.

### **Energy Efficiency**

Energy efficiency issues have many interconnections, both on a regional scale and within the local neighborhood. From a regional perspective, increased energy efficiency in our homes and other buildings translates into reduced power generation demand, which in turn translates into fewer pollutant emissions from power plants. At a neighborhood level, achieving higher energy efficiency can also result in cooler neighborhoods and better local air quality. Ground level ozone forms as summer temperatures climb and car exhaust and other man-made emissions interact with sunlight. Though ozone tends to disperse and travel quickly, concentrations in a local area can be kept lower by reducing local temperatures and the “heat-island” effect. This can be accomplished by increasing overall tree canopy coverage, reducing impervious areas, providing shade-trees in large parking lots, and increasing the reflectivity of roof-tops by using lighter colored materials and coatings designed to reflect radiant energy.

### **Recommendations**

- Provide residents with access to common-sense solutions and home maintenance/repair information to increase energy efficiency and improve the long-term performance and energy efficiency of homes.
- Develop cost-share funding mechanisms for home energy efficiency improvements.
- Establish a shading coverage goal for all new surface parking within the neighborhood and for street tree plantings.

## Water Quality, Watershed Stewardship, and Neighborhood Drainage

Stormwater runoff in the Lincoln Park neighborhood flows overland and eventually into stormdrain collection systems that carry the runoff to stream channels in the Rock Creek watershed. Most of Lincoln Park drains to a stream that begins at Frederick



*Figure 25. Tributary along North Horners Lane*

Avenue and flows under North Horners Lane and into a stormwater management pond on Dover Road. A small area at the corner of Lincoln Avenue and North Horners Lane drains into the stormdrain system that connects to Croydon Creek. Improved lawn care practices, awareness about pet waste disposal, and monitoring and enforcement of pollution discharges to the stormdrain system will improve local water quality in the neighborhood stream. A particular emphasis on targeting pollution prevention actions in the commercial areas along North Stonestreet Avenue must be pursued.

The long, narrow lots found in Lincoln Park are typical of older areas originally developed with septic systems. Typically, the land was graded so that the drain fields sloped away from the houses. Although the neighborhood is now on public sewer, this land pattern in Lincoln Park results in neighborhood blocks that drain toward the interior, with ponding in rear yards, typically downgradient and far removed from the public drainage systems that would normally be located along roadways. In addition, the neighborhood is relatively flat and occupies an area that once supported numerous seeps and springs, some of which remain today, that function as the headwaters of a tributary that enters Rock Creek.

The underlying soils in large areas of the neighborhood are a type that is slowly permeable because of a fragipan, or siltpan, in the subsoil. These factors, in combination with the lack of drainage infrastructure on some lots and along roadways, has resulted in yard drainage problems and local ponding during wet periods. As redevelopment occurs, careful site planning must be used to address these drainage problems and not aggravate lot-to-lot drainage issues. Tools such as limits to impervious cover should be explored to limit the increase in surface runoff, as well as protecting mature trees.

A drainage study was previously undertaken by the City to identify projects that could be implemented to address drainage problems. A number of these projects have been completed, including the construction on a new stormdrain collection system along Ashley Avenue, and drainage improvements in Isreal Park and at the community center. Solutions for lot-to-lot drainage issues remain an issue for the community, and there

continue to be drainage problems in private rear yards that are difficult to address through public infrastructure projects.

## Recommendations

- Continue to implement drainage improvements for neighborhood streets as outlined in the engineering report “Existing Conditions Survey and Hydrological Analysis for Lincoln Park Community”, June 1999 (A. Morton Thomas)
- Evaluate feasibility of alternatives to public drainage improvements along Lincoln Avenue and other streets not currently planned for installation of a public stormdrain system. Alternatives may include low-impact designs such as rain gardens, dry wells, landscaped swales, etc., that can improve drainage problems as well as providing water quality enhancements.
- Explore options for limiting increases in impervious cover as lots are redeveloped. These options should be coordinated with neighborhood design guidelines for historic preservation.
- Develop design guidelines and pursue funding options for homeowner implementation of alternative drainage solutions.
- Identify a community-based name for the unnamed tributary to Rock Creek that historically had its headwaters in the neighborhood, and flows from the community center down past Dover Road.
- Develop pollution prevention plans with local businesses in the Stonestreet corridor to reduce trash and pollutants entering the local tributary through the stormdrain network.
- Work with Board of Education and other property owners of redevelopment sites to provide drainage improvements and connections through the neighborhood that aid in solving existing drainage problems.

## Open Space, Parks, and Public Facilities

Existing parkland and open space in the Lincoln Park neighborhood includes the Memory Walk Park, a passive gathering area at the corner of Douglas and Lincoln Avenues; the improved Lincoln Terrace Park, with active recreational facilities serving the Legacy at Lincoln Park community; and Isreal Park, which along with the Lincoln Park Community Center, is the largest park and contains active recreational facilities serving both the local and larger community. The



Figure 27. Lincoln Park Community Center

contains active recreational facilities serving both the local and larger community. The

Gallilean Fishermans cemetery, though privately owned, provides 3.3 acres of open space in the community. Parkland totals 5.6 acres, or approximately 7% of the neighborhood land area.

As with all neighborhoods in the City, the Lincoln Park neighborhood receives many of its public services from the City of Rockville. The Lincoln Park Community Center and adjacent Isreal Park are the primary focus of service delivery, and contribute significantly to the quality of life in the neighborhood through recreation and other programs offered at the facilities. The community expects high-quality service delivery, but at the same time the neighborhood does not wish to be singled out as a community that is routinely in need of social services for its residents. A police substation is located at the community center, which provides a secure presence to neighborhoods in the vicinity that are not close to the main station at City Hall.

The City provides public water and sewer to the neighborhood, and maintains public stormdrains along Ashley Avenue, Douglas Avenue, North Horners Lane, and small sections of several other streets. The City also operates a sanitary sewer pump station at the corner of North Horners Lane and Frederick Avenue. Trash collection, recycling, and fall leaf collection is also provided by the City of Rockville.

### **Recommendations**

- Explore opportunities for additional pocket parks and active recreation areas within the neighborhood.
- Ensure that adequate passive and active park space is provided with new development and redevelopment projects.
- Support the Lincoln Park Community Center as a hub of community activity for all residents.
- Provide additional park space with redevelopment areas.

## **Chapter 6: IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

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**GOAL:** To implement the recommendations of the Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan.

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. Establish priorities, timeframes, responsible parties and strategies for the implementation of the recommendations of the Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan.

### **Overall Strategy**

An implementation strategy is critical to the success of any Master Plan that is attempting to achieve critical change. If a Plan cannot be or is not implemented, then the planning exercise will have been futile and the affected stakeholders will become frustrated. This Plan therefore outlines a series of action steps that can be taken, with associated timeframes for each. The assigned timeframes are indicative of the priorities as well as available resources. The implementation steps are categorized into catalyst construction projects, and legislative remedies.

Because the Lincoln Park Plan supports redevelopment in the Stonestreet corridor as recommended in the East Rockville Neighborhood Plan, much of the implementation in that and other areas is dependent on the timing of redevelopment. The redevelopment project that could be a catalyst, along with development of the WINX site, to the redevelopment efforts is the redevelopment of the School Board-owned property on North Stonestreet Avenue known as the Lincoln Center. The Plan recommends that the City work very closely with Montgomery County Public Schools to facilitate these redevelopments so that they occur in a manner that meets the recommendations of the neighborhood plan and occur as quickly as possible. However, the groundwork for the public improvements that are necessary to support this redevelopment must be accomplished in advance.

Implementation requires the effort of a series of stakeholders, including neighborhood residents, the City of Rockville, various state and federal transportation agencies, property owners, the Lincoln Park and East Rockville Civic Associations, and private developers, among others. These parties will need to develop a close working relationship to allow the recommendations to move forward.

## Legislative Steps

Often the outcome of a Master Planning process will require changes in certain parameters affecting the planning area. In the case of Lincoln Park, with redevelopment and change in character planned for several large parcels in or near the neighborhood, several zoning changes will be required.

### Zoning Changes

The Plan recommends the following zoning changes, as shown on the proposed zoning map:

Rezone the property known as 110 Frederick Avenue from the I-2 (Light Industrial) Zone to a new zone that allows small scale office, live-work units and other commercial enterprises that would serve the community. An appropriate mixed-use zone does not exist in the City's Zoning Ordinance currently. However, the results of the East Rockville Implementation Study likely will result in a zone, such as the proposed TCE (Town Center East) Zone, which would allow a variety of uses compatible with a residential neighborhood.

The Plan recommends that the Section Map Amendment process that will implement the zoning changes be commenced immediately upon adoption of the Neighborhood Plan. This will allow the changes to be made in about 4 to 6 months.

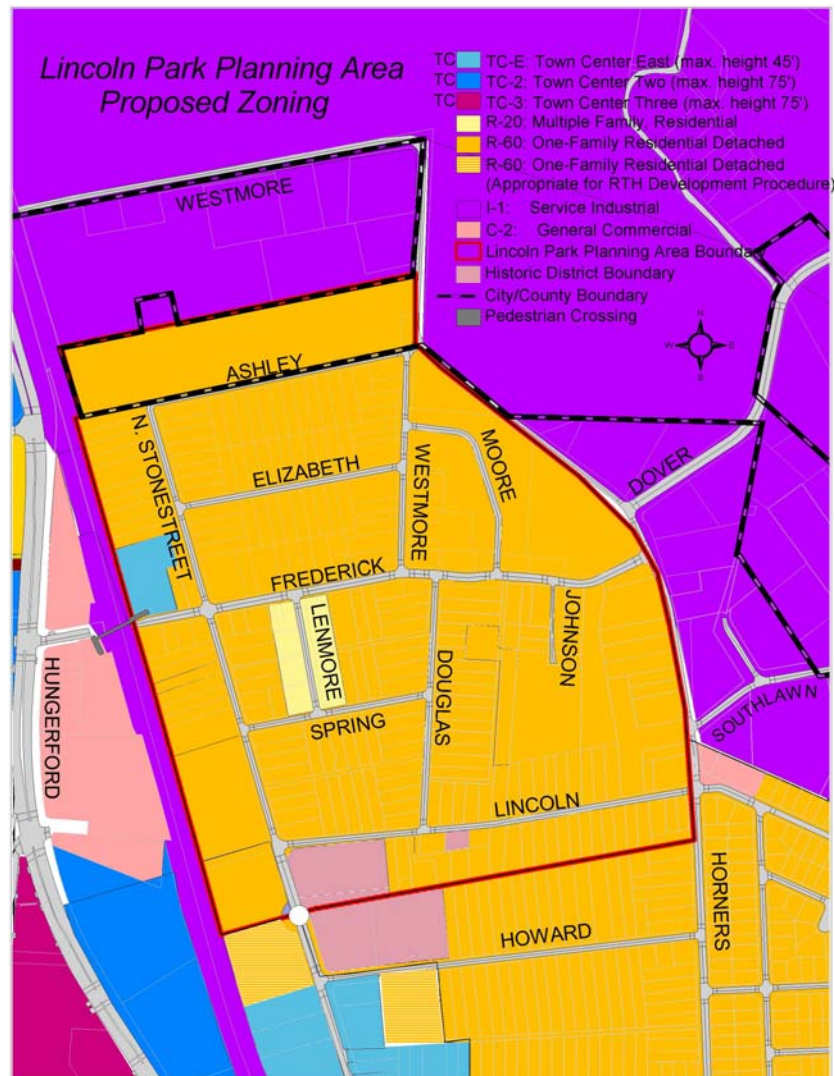


Figure 27. Proposed Zoning Map



Figure 28. Illustrative of East Rockville Neighborhood Plan

## Public Projects

The following are critical public improvement projects that are essential to the success of the Plan, and therefore should be added to the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) as soon as possible.

### 1. Stonestreet Avenue Realignment and Reconstruction

*Priority:* within 5 years; tied to redevelopment of the Metro station

*Project Description:* The transformation of Stonestreet Avenue from industrial corridor to an attractive boulevard will require realignment and reconstruction of the entire roadway between Park Road and Lincoln Avenue. This will be accomplished in conjunction with the reconfiguration of the Stonestreet

Avenue/Park Road intersection. The existing 60-foot wide right-of-way for North Stonestreet Avenue may need to be expanded to accommodate the new cross-section of the roadway. The roadway will include a landscaped median, one travelway in each direction, on-street parking spaces on both sides of the street, and a pedestrian zone including street tree planting areas and pedestrian walkways.

A smaller-scale traffic circle should be constructed between Howard Avenue and Lincoln Avenue to clearly delineate the end of the mixed-use area and the beginning of the residential neighborhood. The circle also has the function of providing an easy turnaround for the proposed shuttle to run along the Stonestreet corridor.

*Responsibility:* This project should be implemented primarily by the City of Rockville in acquiring property for the rights-of-way as necessary. However, the City could potentially partner with others, including but not limited to, private developers for the redevelopment of the residual land into the type of structures that are desired.

## 2. Traffic Calming Measures

*Priority:* with 2 years

*Project Description:* The Plan recommends a series of traffic calming measures throughout the neighborhood on streets with cut-through traffic problems. Pedestrian safety measures were installed in FY2003 on North Horners Lane. It is the intent of including this recommendation to ensure that adequate funding is provided in the CIP to address all of the traffic calming measures discussed in the Plan. Other traffic calming measures may be required on North Stonestreet Avenue, and also at the intersection Ashley Avenue, North Horners Lane and Westmore Avenue.

*Responsibility:* City of Rockville, LPCA



Figure 29. Traffic Calming Measures

## Recommendations for Further Study

Also recommended for further study by City staff is the potential replanning of the Southlawn industrial area that borders both the East Rockville and Lincoln Park communities. As recommended in the Plan, this area should be examined with the goal of creating a development pattern that is compatible with the community which it abuts. This may involve new development standards, but more importantly a potential new

zoning category that could allow some low-intensity industrial use along with new retail, small-scale office and residential uses. Equally important would be a transportation study of the area that would determine how commercial traffic can be managed in the area while also not impacting the residential community as it does currently. This small area study of land use and transportation in this area should be undertaken soon after adoption of this Plan, so that its resulting recommendations may be incorporated into the City's planning and capital improvements plan as soon as possible. Potentially, this could be incorporated into the study of an additional connection to MD 355 in the vicinity of Westmore Road.

### **Required Coordination**

The Lincoln Park Civic Association, neighborhood residents, and the City of Rockville are obvious partners in implementing many of the action steps outlined in the Neighborhood Plan. However, there are other important partners, including the East Rockville Civic Association, Montgomery County, the Montgomery County Board of Education, property owners, and private developers, among others. It is recommended that the Lincoln Park Civic Association (LPCA) and members of the Plan's Advisory Group collaborate closely to move these projects and implementation steps forward.

# **Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan**

## **APPENDIX**

## **Appendix 1: Background Report**

# **LINCOLN PARK NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN**

## **Draft Background Report**

### **August 2002**

The following information is provided to provide a basic level information about the Lincoln Park community. As the Neighborhood Plan process proceeds, additional information and analysis will be generated to supplement this information.

#### Existing Conditions

#### NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERISTICS

<b>Neighborhood Characteristics (2000 Census)</b>		<b>Land Use Acreage</b>	
Residents	900	Area (acres)	82
Housing Units	329	Single-Family Residential	64.9
Attached Units	62	Parkland	5.6
Apartments (Public)	59	Attached/multifamily (Public)	1.6 (4.2)
Average Persons per HH	2.7	Open Space (Cemetery)	3.3
Housing Density (units per acre)	4.0		

#### **Population Characteristics (2000 Census)**

White	37 (4%)
Black	622 (69%)
Hispanic	195 (22%)
Asian	15 (1.5%)
Other	31 (3.5%)

1. Census shows a slightly higher than average person per household (City is 2.65)
2. Single family uses occupy almost 80% of the neighborhood land area.
3. Population is high for Black and Hispanic residents (9% and 11% for Rockville).

#### Land Uses

The Lincoln Park neighborhood is predominately residential with 75 of 82 total acres being used for housing. The remaining uses are related to residential neighborhoods such as a cemetery, churches and parks.

- Churches are the second largest user in the neighborhood due to recent expansions by the Mount Calvary Baptist Church, which has acquired 2.4 acres for expansion of the church building and parking lot. The Clinton A.M.E. Zion Church has .6 acres on Westmore Avenue and the Iglesia de Dios Church across the street has .4 acres. Crusader Baptist Church of God is located within the former Lincoln High School building on North Stonestreet Avenue.
- Parkland is another use that is closely related to residential with 5.6 acres of land in Lincoln Park. Isreal Park, the large park between Frederick and Lincoln has 4.2

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acres while the corner park at Westmore Avenue and North Horners Lane has 1.1 acres. There is a small corner park (Memory Walk Park) at Lincoln and Douglas Avenues with .3 acres. The park space for Lincoln Park is below the 18 acres per 1000 population standard set for Rockville.

- A third large land user is industrial/warehouse that occupies 5.5 acres of land along North Stonestreet Avenue bordering the neighborhood. The majority, 3.9 acres, is owned by the Montgomery County Board of Education. Another 1.5 acres is located on Frederick Avenue next to the Metro/CSX railroad tracks.

## **ZONING AND CODE REQUIREMENTS**

The current zoning for most of Lincoln Park is R-60, which is primarily a residential zone for "Detached one-family dwellings" on 6,000 square foot-minimum lots but allows churches, offices, art studios, and boarding houses for two or less persons.

- Other permitted "Home Occupation" uses include dress making, tailoring, millinery and sewing of fabric for custom apparel and home furnishings. Uses permitted by "Special Exception" are housing for elderly or handicapped, childcare, accessory apartments, public utility structures and philanthropic institutions.

The apartments along Lenmore Avenue are located in the R-20 Zone for Multiple Family dwellings, with permitted uses similar to those of the R-60 residential zone. The density limitations are 2,000 square feet per unit, or a density of approximately 22 dwelling units per acre, while the maximum height allowable is forty-five feet.

The other major zoning category is I-2 "Light Industrial" and applies to the property at 110 Frederick Avenue.

- The current 1.5-acre I-2 property is just outside of the Town Center area and is occupied with two warehouse buildings.
- This zone allows light manufacturing, warehousing and wholesaling facilities including: the general assembly of electrical and electronic appliances, packaging of products, photographic processing, contractors and storage yards, radio television studios, greenhouses, research labs, printing, public utilities, public transportation, parking lots, veterinarian office and grooming, rental of industrial commodities, appliance repair and repair of industrial products.

Additional zoning and code enforcement descriptions for R-60 parking, persons per household, home occupation, accessory buildings, building height and maximum lot coverage are important to Lincoln Park housing.

- Current minimums for frontage are sixty feet with thirty-five feet allowed if the lot is sixty feet at the building line.
- Maximum lot coverage is thirty-five percent and maximum building height is thirty-five feet that allows for a substantial increase in building size and height (35% of a 10,000 square foot lot is 3,500 square feet).
- Setbacks are twenty-five feet front and eight feet side, which is standard throughout the city. Accessory buildings (garages or storage) are allowed within the R-60 Zone

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with maximum twenty-five percent rear yard coverage, setback requirements of 3 feet and a fifteen foot height limit.

- Home Occupations are allowed for the mentioned uses with no separate entrance or advertising sign and a maximum of twenty percent of the floor area or three hundred square feet. There is also a restriction on outside employment and motorized tools must be electric and not greater than three horsepower.
- The housing code has set the maximum for persons per dwelling at one per seventy square feet of bedroom and fifty additional feet for each additional person. Bedrooms cannot be common space (living rooms) or non-habitable space (closets, bathrooms or basement without exits).
- Parking is allowed (required for non-residential) for passenger vehicles and not more than one delivery type commercial vehicle not exceeding three-quarter ton capacity or one truck and one trailer that has been issued a special permit (section 23-27) but not used as a dwelling. The trailer must be parked behind the front building line.

## **CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT**

Lincoln Park is residential with local residential streets that are sometimes used as connections for traffic traveling to the industrial park along Gude Drive. The location of the neighborhood and the lack of major arterials south of Gude Drive have created a traffic problem.

- North Horners is the best example of "cut-through" traffic with over 8,000 trips and 440 trucks per day. This local street has become the connection to the industrial uses on Westmore and Gude Drives. Traffic drops to 5,000 northbound trips after Southlawn Lane because of the Gude Drive attraction and the rest goes on to Westmore or the neighborhood.
- Within the neighborhood, North Stonestreet Avenue is a commercial collector that is not used as heavily with 2,600 trips and 220 trucks. Most of the traffic is produced by the County Board of Education facility.
- Frederick Avenue was once connected to Hungerford Drive (Route 355) but was disconnected due to Metro construction. This reduced through traffic but overall traffic remains constant from the 1984 levels of 1,600 -1,700 trips a day and 190 of those trucks. The rest of the neighborhood streets are lightly traveled with 200-500 trips a day.

The following table summarizes the City's street classifications for neighborhood streets. Primary residential streets are intended to distribute traffic between neighborhoods and arterial streets. Class 1 Primary Residential streets have more than 5,000 trips per day, with Class 2 having less than 5,000 trips per day. Secondary residential streets carry less than 2,000 trips per day.

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STREET	EXISTING R.O.W. WIDTH	DESIGNATION
North Stonestreet Av.	45' Howard to Ashley	Primary Residential
North Horners Lane.	45' Lincoln to Southlawn	Primary Residential
	35' Southlawn to Westmore	Primary Residential
Frederick Av.	45' Stonestreet to Horners	Primary Residential
Lenmore Av.	50' Frederick to Spring	Secondary Residential
Lincoln Av.	45' Stonestreet to Douglas	Secondary Residential
	40' Douglas to Horners	Secondary Residential
Westmore Av.	45' Frederick to Ashley	Secondary Residential
Spring Av.	40' Stonestreet to Douglas	Secondary Residential
Elizabeth Av.	40' Stonestreet to Westmore	Secondary Residential
Douglas Av.	35' Lincoln to Frederick	Secondary Residential
Ashley Av.	35' Stonestreet to Westmore	Secondary Residential

Transit serves the neighborhood along Frederick Avenue, North Horners Lane and North Stonestreet Avenue. Buses connect to the transit center and the Town Center every thirty minutes.

## HOUSING

There are 329 residences in Lincoln Park 121 apartments and 208 single-family homes. Most of the homes are small, 900 to 1,500 square feet, with relatively large lots of 10,000 square feet, usually 50 feet wide and over 200 feet deep. The deep lots give Lincoln Park residents privacy and separation from neighbors. The apartments are along Lenmore Avenue in the center of the neighborhood with very little open space.

The housing age is generally older than Rockville with most of the homes built before 1960 and 43% before 1950. There are also twenty-four homes built before 1930 and eight before 1920. Some of the oldest homes are along Lincoln Avenue. Three new homes were built since 1996, but new construction is limited by the lack of available vacant land, with approximately 9 vacant lots remaining.

STREET (presumed #)	PARCELS	ACRES	DEVELOPABLE AS S.F
204 Lincoln	1	.27	YES
211 Lincoln	1	.24	YES
306 Lincoln	1	.22	YES
317 Lincoln	1	.20	YES
711 Douglas	1	.28	YES
201 Frederick	1	.05	NO
205 Frederick	1	.21	YES
309 Frederick	1	.49	YES
904 Westmore	1	.24	YES
TOTAL	9	2.20	8 YES

- A program for housing and rehabilitation through low interest loans has been available through the Home Improvement Program that residents can apply for.

Loans are reduced by City contributions up to \$25,000 for home improvements and deferred, at no cost to the homeowner, for low-income residents that stay in their home beyond five years after repairs.

- Housing value has been steadily increasing over the last twenty years with a 120% increase during the eighties and a 29% increase during the nineties. The number sold each year varies between 13 to none and over a twenty-year period only 100 were sold.

## **Historic Preservation**

Lincoln Park has a small collection of homes recognized as historic. Lincoln Avenue has four structures recognized as Historic Properties by the City's Planning Division, Preservation Office.

- Lincoln High School was built in 1935 as the first Black High School and is now a Baptist Church. Several homes are also listed: the Cooke, Ruben Hill and Harris houses along Lincoln Avenue. Clinton Church is a historic congregation that was created in 1867 by freedmen and located in central Rockville but moved in 1956 to the Westmore Avenue location. The Fisherman's Cemetery was a black cemetery created in 1917 by the Order of Galilean Fishermen, an insurance group.

The Preservation Office of the City of Rockville will be determining the need for further historic descriptions. Lincoln Park has over 24 structures built before 1930 so more opportunities exists.

## **Commercial And Industrial**

The Montgomery County Board of Education has 3.9 acres along Stonestreet Avenue between Lincoln and Howard Avenues. This property is zoned R-60 and will be considered for redevelopment. A printing office occupies three large buildings of nearly 100,000 square feet on 4.5 acres along the eastside of North Horners Street. The regional industrial influence is also strong with 112 acres of industrial land on the northeastern border of the neighborhood and twenty acres on the northern boundary.

## **Appendix 2: Community Kickoff Meeting Summary**

**May 9, 2002**

### **Background**

Meeting attendees were divided into three groups (Green, Red and Blue). There were approximately 20 residents in the Green Group with mostly long-term residents that have been in the neighborhood for 30 to 50 years. There were several new residents and several non-resident property owners. The Red Group had 18-20 members who were mostly older residents, as well as a representative of Rockville Housing Enterprises, the City's public housing agency. The Blue Group had 20-25 residents that were also older long-term neighbors, and included a representative from Mt. Calvary Baptist Church.

All three were asked the same questions - to identify the strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities for the current and future conditions of the Lincoln park neighborhood. After the groups had identified these, each group prioritized the items by casting votes in each category.

### **Green Group Results**

#### **Strengths of Neighborhood**

The residents were asked to express the *Strengths* (reason you live in the neighborhood) of Lincoln Park. Many had the same feelings about community interaction and shared values. The "Sense of Place", "Shared Values" and "Civic Activism" was mentioned as a reason to be in Lincoln Park. The area had a "Familiar" quality with support from neighbors that created a community, more spiritual than just comfortable. Some of the residents have lived here for 50 years or longer. The interaction of residents combined with family traditions makes this neighborhood a living history of long term residents.

Transportation was also a very important reason to locate in Lincoln Park. The METRO and Train Station were specifically mentioned as important assets. Most of the residents can easily drive or walk to the station. Buses were also important connections to western Rockville. Community resources were mentioned as part of the Lincoln Park Neighborhood. Community parks, Centers, schools, churches and government facilities were considered an important part of the neighborhood. Local business was also important for residents. Auto related services and local business was seen as easily accessible. Some wanted more variety and amount of business uses.

#### **Rating of Strengths**

- History of the area was the biggest reason most of the residents voted to live there and the strongest feature. (9 votes)

- 
- Transportation access was the next most important feature of the neighborhood and an important strength. (6 votes)
  - Sense of Community (3 votes)
  - Community Resources (3 votes)
  - Community Business was also an important feature that benefited the residents. (3 votes)

## **Weaknesses of Neighborhood**

Neighborhood weaknesses were described as problems that need solutions. The residents had twice as many weaknesses to list as strengths. Participants noted that many problems, such as drinking, loitering, drug users and transient residents that didn't maintain their homes, were caused by residents or non-residents that did not have the same regard for the neighborhood as long-time residents. Traffic was also a problem when it could not be identified as local (commercial) or was fast and noisy. The Mt. Calvary Baptist Church on North Horners Lane had acquired homes for future parking and had created a severe controversy. Neighbors don't want to lose housing, the structural fabric of the neighborhood. A concentration of social service centers for homeless, drug care, or shelters seem to be more frequent in lower income neighborhoods such as Lincoln Park. The perception is that shelters create groups of loiterers or drinkers that wander the neighborhood. Code enforcement could be better to protect the housing quality. The City was also criticized for not having policies to control absentee landlords to improve housing or rental conditions. On street, overnight parking was another problem mentioned by some residents that was not being controlled by the City.

## **Rating of Weaknesses**

- Many residents rated loitering and drinking in the park as a problem. (9 votes)
- Loss of homes to institutional (churches) uses. (8 votes)
- Drug traffic. (8 votes)
- Transient nature of neighborhood, rental housing. (7 votes)
- Noise from traffic on Elizabeth Avenue. (7 votes)
- Traffic Stonestreet Ave commercial and cut-through traffic. (4 votes)
- Poor drainage. (3 votes)
- Absentee landlords, code enforcement and parking problems. (2 votes each)

## **Opportunities of Neighborhood**

How will the neighborhood strengthen itself by taking advantage of future opportunities? The residents saw protection of the existing housing stock as important for the future of the neighborhood. Home ownership opportunities and consistent code enforcement

were needed improvements. Community retail services also rated as important. Residents saw redevelopment along Stonestreet and Ashley Avenues as opportunities for more housing. Mixed income housing was also mentioned as important along with a connection across Route 355 and the railroad. Residents were interested in Historic Preservation for their significant housing.

#### *Rating of Opportunities*

- Home ownership opportunities (affordable and mixed income). (10 votes)
- Consistent code enforcement. (8 votes)
- Pharmacy in neighborhood (hardware, cleaners ...). (6 votes)
- Historic District, redevelopment of Stonestreet Avenue and more housing (3 votes)
- A connection across 355 and railroad. (2 votes)
- Make Ashley Avenue a cul-de-sac. 2 votes

#### **Threats to the Neighborhood**

The neighborhood threats were similar to weaknesses, which were identified as external problems. Traffic congestion and safety are a current threat to the neighborhood. Crime is a very important problem and expansion of government and church institutions is a threat. Industrial expansion did not rank as high as Institutional expansion. Commercial traffic, parking and use conflicts were next in importance. Diversity was mentioned as a problem for future residents that may not connect with community activities.

#### *Rating of Threats*

- Crime was perceived as the greatest threat to the community. (9 votes)
- Traffic was next with safety and congestion as problems. (8 votes)
- Impacts from industrial uses and industrial expansion were together (6 votes)
- Commercial impacts were seen as a future threat (parking overflow) (4 votes)
- Diversity of neighborhood could change the history of the neighborhood. (2 votes)

#### **Summary**

The Green Group expressed a strong community awareness that recognized the history and shared values of Lincoln Park. Strengths were expressed as values such as history, sense of community and civic activism. Access to transportation and local commercial services were seen as strengths. Weaknesses were considered problems that weakened the sense of community that long-term residents respected such as, drunkenness, loitering, drug use and drug sales. Street crime was described as destructive of neighborhood values but traffic noise and loud parties were equally disturbing. Opportunities were described as home protection and expansion. More housing of mixed income and stronger code enforcement would improve the housing conditions. More community retail services were also important for future neighborhood

success. Threats to the neighborhood were mainly problems that threatened stability and home ownership. Crime was the biggest problem mentioned while traffic and institutional expansion were second.

## **Red Group Results**

### **Strengths of Neighborhood**

The Red Group felt that affordable housing was the main reason they chose Lincoln Park. Family history and "long-term presence" was the second most commonly stated reason and seems to fit the character of the residents. Other responses given as strengths were location near the METRO, security and City Services (police). This closely matches the responses given by residents of East Rockville. The Red Group differs from the Green Group by citing affordability even though there were many older residents that probably were not looking to buy homes.

### **Rating of Strengths**

- Affordable housing and opportunity to buy homes. (10 votes)
- Deep roots within the neighborhood was the second most important idea (8 votes)
- Location close to activities and the METRO (10 votes)
- Security as a place that is safe and can be called home. (5 votes)
- City service was not an important response but was mentioned and coincided with other responses from East Rockville. (3 votes)

### **Weaknesses of the Neighborhood**

This Group felt that the neighborhood had a bad reputation from a combination of drug use and sales, loitering, and alcohol sales at the convenience stores. Neighborhood appearance was another problem, as some felt that yards and houses were not maintained. There was also a feeling that city property was not maintained as well as other parts of the City. Montgomery County owns the largest block of public property along North Stonestreet Avenue. Abandoned vehicles and large trucks parked in the neighborhood was also a complaint. Other things mentioned were rental housing, too much diversity, unemployment, too much commercial and high school students must walk to school.

### *Rating of Weaknesses*

- Bad reputation for the Lincoln Park Neighborhood was a heavy weight for many residents including drug sales and abuse, loitering and liquor sales. 14 votes
- Many residents described a generally bad appearance throughout the neighborhood. 6 votes
- Abandoned and oversized vehicles were a problem for many. 4 votes

## Opportunities of Neighborhood

The opportunities were more varied and divided between individual opportunities and city opportunities. The most frequently mentioned was public transportation or the opportunity to use transportation. Connecting to the elected officials and promoting new policy was a opportunity for some. Expanding senior services was also an important opportunity and should be expected in a neighborhood whose population is aging. Other less important opportunities were mentoring children and the community center. These are somewhat related because community services often relate to local children and activities are often guided for their benefit. Many citizens saw this as another strength response rather than an opportunity to change or expand things. Some responses did suggest more street lighting and more civic projects by residents but most responses involved existing services or political processes.

### *Ranking of Opportunities*

- Public transportation for residents. (8 votes)
- Opportunity to buy home was an important strength. (7 votes)
- Expand senior services for Lincoln Park. (6 votes)
- Access to the Mayor of Rockville and City Council to tailor public policy. (5 votes)

## Threats to the Neighborhood

The responses were influenced by the original responses to strengths of the neighborhood. A loss of affordable housing was important but so was expansion of parking for institutional uses such as churches or large retail uses. This is a current problem for Lincoln Park residents and has resulted in the loss of 6-8 lots for proposed new church development. Expansion of commercial businesses on North Stonestreet Avenue and dense high-rise infill redevelopment of Stonestreet Avenue business and the county property were threats for many. The loss of affordable housing combined with more local traffic and loss of neighborhood character was seen as a real threat. Increases in the cost of living were also seen as a problem for existing residents that may not be able to afford to stay in their homes. Road connections, transient residents, decisions made outside of residents control and increased cost of housing were not as important but mentioned.

### *Rating of Threats*

- A decrease in affordable housing was a threat that related to increased acquisition of residential properties by institutions. (7 votes)
- Church acquires property and increases parking. (7 votes)
- Expansion of commercial businesses (6 votes)
- Dense infill (5 votes)
- Increased cost of living for existing residents that reduced their opportunity to own a home. (4 votes)

## **Summary of Red Group**

The most important issue for this Group was home and security of their homes. They felt that affordable homes were the best feature of the neighborhood above community and family history. This is different from the Green Group that valued the community and its common values. Location and security were other important qualities that strengthened the home as an important center for the neighborhood. City service was mentioned but not as much as in East Rockville but similar to the Green Group. The Red Group felt that Lincoln Park was tarnished with a bad reputation and that affected their home values. Similar issues were mentioned for the Green Group but there was more of an emphasis on crime and loud neighbors. Poorly maintained homes were a disadvantage for the neighborhood reputation and large vehicles parked in the neighborhood were mentioned for both the Green and Red Groups. Public transportation and the opportunity to buy housing were important opportunities which was different than the Green Group, which mentioned more housing and protection of housing. Access to the Mayor and Council was seen as an important opportunity, which may be a result of the activity around the Town Center and potential redevelopment. Threats were also related to the infill and redevelopment within the Town Center. Dense, high-rise or large parking lots were seen as problems that would severely hurt the neighborhood. This group mentioned infill as more of a threat than a potential.

## **Results For Blue Group**

### **Strengths of Neighborhood**

The Blue Group held high regard for city services, much like East Rockville residents. Sewer and water, Fire, Police and Emergency Services were all mentioned as important reasons to locate in Lincoln Park. Location close to the central city, jobs, recreation and the METRO was also an important reason to live in Lincoln Park. Lincoln Park was seen as a safe community where neighbors help and it is easy to walk.

#### *Rating Strengths*

- City services including police, fire, sewer and emergency services were important for this Group. (19 votes combined)
- The community Center was important for Lincoln Park residents and a popular reason to live there. (6 votes)
- Close to shopping the METRO and recreation (6 votes each)
- Safe community where walking is easy (4 votes)

### **Weaknesses of Neighborhood**

The concerns were very local with problems about a new house at the corner of Ashley and North Stonestreet Avenue rating as high as too much industrial and lack of code enforcement for housing. Traffic was another commonly mentioned problem that was common to all of the neighbors in Lincoln Park. North Horners Lane, North Stonestreet

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Avenue, Ashley Avenue, Douglas Avenue, and Lincoln Avenue were specifically mentioned as streets with traffic. Loitering was a problem on North Horners Lane and Lincoln Avenue as well as Lenmore and Frederick Avenues. Crime or drug traffic was not mentioned as much as with the other groups. Traffic, trash pickup, industrial uses, oversized vehicles, drainage and industrial fumes were also concerns.

#### *Rating of Weaknesses*

- A new house on Ashley Avenue (6 votes)
- Too much industrial (6 votes)
- More strict code enforcement on homes was important for just as many residents. (6 votes)
- Traffic and loitering (5 votes each)

#### **Neighborhood Opportunities**

There was a strong feeling to maintain the homes in this neighborhood and resist conversion to institutional. Residential infill on the Montgomery County property, WINX radio property and Lincoln Terrace redevelopment were all seen as opportunities to expand residential. Traffic also was important also to help housing stability. An entrance to the community and improving the traffic pattern were opportunities to solve traffic problems.

#### *Rating of Opportunities*

- Keep Lincoln Park residential. (8 votes)
- Improve entrance to the community: Frederick Ave Bridge, Westmore Road, First Street-Baltimore Road, N. Stonestreet Ave, North Horners Lane and Southlawn Lane. (7 votes)
- Convert MCPS property, on west side of Stonestreet between Lincoln and Spring Street, to single family. (5 votes)
- Lincoln Terrace conversion opportunity to single family low-income housing. (5 votes)
- WINX property to single family homes. (4 votes)

#### **Threats to the Neighborhood**

The group felt that past mistakes should not be repeated. This was recognition of an important opportunity that will be possible with redevelopment of the Town Center and the Stonestreet Avenue corridor. Continued resubdivision of lots was a threat to many because of increases in traffic and loss of privacy. This is possible only for a limited portion of the neighborhood but has happened on Lincoln Avenue. Industrial expansion was seen as another threat that would hurt property values. This agrees with the strong desire to have more residential and minimize industrial impacts.

### *Rating of Threats*

- Continuing past patterns of poor land use decisions and Frederick Ave Bridge. (13 votes)
- Resubdivision of lots to create housing. (8 votes)
- Expansion of industry along Stonestreet Ave and into neighborhood. (6 votes)
- Additional traffic conflicts. (3 votes)

### **Summary of Blue Group**

The Blue Group was very supportive of city services and community services at the Community center. Another common response was the favorable location near the Town Center and the METRO. Lincoln Park was seen as a safe neighborhood that was within walking distance to most of Rockville. The Group felt that there was too much industrial traffic and not enough code enforcement. There was equal concern for very local development issues. Loitering was a problem that is also common to the other Groups. Industrial uses and traffic were mentioned more by this Group. Opportunities were focused on preservation of housing with the expansion of housing through infill and the elimination of industrial uses. Vacant property was seen as an opportunity to provide more housing as was the redevelopment of the public housing. Traffic was something that could be changed by the infill as well as a way to create a new entrance to the neighborhood. Threats were easily described as repetition of past land use mistakes where industrial and institutional uses intrude into the neighborhood.